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OUT JUNE 1ST

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VOL. 16

NO. 7

SPRING 1937

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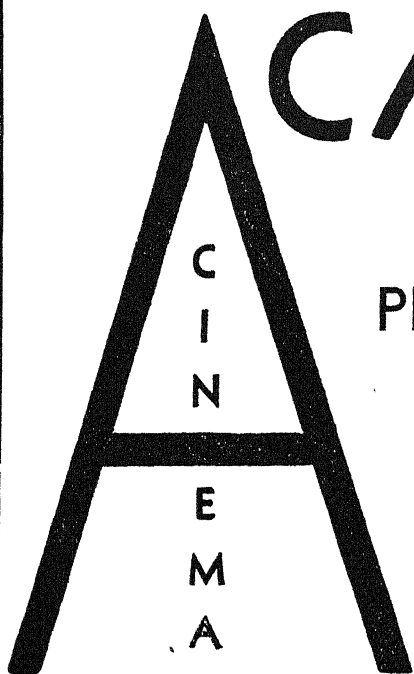
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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

W. H. STEPHENS, for nearly forty years in the Egyptian Government Service in various educational capacities, was a member of Arabic examination boards and English lecturer at Dar ul Ulum and the Higher Training College, Cairo. His books include *Nile Readers*, *Introduction to English Literature*, and *Elements of English Verse*. These are published by Macmillan. He was one of the speakers at the reception in honour of Al Mutanabbi given last autumn by the Saudi Arabian Minister, the Iraqi Minister and the Egyptian Chargé d'Affaires at the Royal Egyptian Legation.

GEORGE GARRETT is an unemployed North Country seaman, whose inclusion among our contributors we owe to the courtesy of *New Writing*. His examination of *The Tempest* brings, we consider, a new and refreshing approach to Shakespearean criticism.

E. F. BRAYHAM is an economist who has made the subject of wheat his particular study.

T. C. WILSON was for a time associate editor of the *Westminster Magazine*. A poet frequently printed in worth-while American reviews, his previous contribution to LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY was *A Song for Christmas Day* in our second number.

TEO POH LENG is a Chinese British subject, born in 1912 and living in Singapore, where he is a master in a government elementary English school. The poem here printed is a section of a long work written three years ago, but not published because "very little of my work has been submitted for publication." Some of his poems have, however, won the approval of, among others, Sylvia Townsend Warner and Ronald Bottrall: the *Song of the Night Express* is his first to win ours. We like it for its use of the English language and, after presenting translations from Chinese authors in Number 5, we are glad now to print a Chinese poet writing directly in English.

KEIDRYCH RHYS says "I'm twenty, Welsh-speaking and have written poems in Welsh and dialect. I've farmed in Carmarthen (without success) and was F/O R.A.F." He adds that he has paid for two unpublished novels, but has a book of poems coming out shortly, and also translations of Welsh poets.

VALENTINE ACKLAND, recently returned from Barcelona, will be familiar to readers through her contributions to *Time and Tide*, *The Left Review*, *The New Republic*, *New Masses*. She has published *Country Conditions* (Lawrence and Wishart), and is joint author, with Sylvia Townsend Warner, of a book of poems, *Whether a Dove or Seagull* (Chatto and Windus).

JEAN PRÉVOST is represented by a story from his book *Lucie-Paulette*.

LILIKA NAKOS is a modern Greek writer whose stories have appeared in *Monde*, *Europe*, *Bifur*, *Les Nouvelles Littéraires*, *La Revue Hebdomadaire* and *Story*. She has published a book of stories, written in French, and a novel, *Lost Souls*, published in Greek at Athens, is being translated into English. Gide, Barbusse, Rolland and Duhamel have spoken highly of her talent. *The House on Fire* is the second of her stories to be published in LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY, the first being *The Broken Doll* in our last number.

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MARIANNE MOORE, author of *Poems* (Egoist Press, 1921), *Observations* (Dial Press, 1924), *Selected Poems* (Faber and Faber, 1935) and *The Pangolin* (Brendin Publishing Company, 1936), will also be remembered for her editing of *The Dial*. These achievements make us particularly honoured to count her as a contributor, and it is with special pleasure that we follow the long poem printed in Number 2, with a story which, while clearly a poet's story, will, we think, surprise those who know only the verse of this particular poet.

DYLAN THOMAS, who delighted the critics in 1934 with his *Eighteen Poems*, dismayed at least half of them with his *Twenty-Five Poems* in 1936. One of these latter was printed in our second number. We had hoped for more, but received instead a story, which is, we think, "typically Thomas" (and that is meant as praise), though different from *The Lemon*, printed in Number 3. We would suggest that *A Prospect of the Sea* shows considerable development since then.

ELIZABETH BISHOP, sending us a postcard of the Teatro San Carlos y Consulado Cubano at Key West, Florida, is "at present isolated on a tiny island." She writes "My original note said I was a young American poet living in Paris, etc. I can think of nothing new except that I am now living in America." But we would add that *The Baptism* is her first story, as we believe *The Man-Moth* (Spring, 1936) was her first poem, to be printed in an English review.

OSWELL BLAKESTON has published stories, articles and poems in a wide range of periodicals, including: *The Bookman*, *The Listener*, *The Twentieth Century*, *Programme*, *New Oxford Outlook*, *Janus*, *The Literary Review*, *Soma*, *Film Art*, *John O'London's Weekly*, *Dope*, etc., etc. Also drawings and photos in a number of papers, and decorations for the recent *Cinema Survey*. Edited *Seed* with Herbert Jones and made *avant-garde* movies with Francis Bruguière. Eight books including verse book, *Death While Swimming*, illustrated by Len Lye. Has broadcast. Weird stories printed in many recent collections, including those published by: Messrs. Selwyn & Blount, Messrs. Philip Allan & Co., etc.

JOHN PUDNEY has adapted *The Albions' Secret* as a radio play, under the title *Uncle Arthur*. He has been previously represented (September 1935) with a story, *Jessie's Eggs*, in which a swan spoke, and is the author of *Spring Encounter* (1933), *Open Sky* (1934) and *And Lastly the Fireworks* (1935).

MULK RAJ ANAND has previously contributed, in addition to reviews, the story *The Terrorist*, printed in Number 4. Born thirty years ago in Peshawar, Dr. Anand studied philosophy in the universities of Cambridge and London. He is the author of several books including *The Hindu View of Art* (1932, in collaboration with Eric Gill), *Persian Painting* (1932), *The Lost Child and Untouchable* (1935). His latest, *The Coolie* (1936) has been published in the U.S.S.R., where it is having those Russian sales which make an English best-seller look like a remainder.

ERIC WALTER WHITE has had stories in the old *Life and Letters*, *New Stories*, *Story* and several anthologies. In addition, he has written books, including *Walking Shadows*, *Wander Birds*, *Stravinsky's Sacrifice to Apollo*, and recently published *The Little Chimney Sweep*, contributing text to pictures from Lotte Reiniger's film of that name. In our last issue, he was represented by an essay on modern Greek folk music and a translation of an article by Bertolt Brecht on Chinese drama.

WINIFRED HOLMES will be familiar for her film-articles in *Sight and Sound*, *World Film News*, etc. She has also contributed to *Asia*, *The New English Weekly*, *The Adelphi*, etc., published a book of verse, *Variations on a Metaphysic Theme* (1933) and wrote the verse for the National Book Council's film *Cover to Cover*.

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VOL. 16

NO. 7

EDITORIAL

WE HAVE devoted this number primarily to short stories. For this reason, the Reviews of Releases have been, for once, omitted. We hope that readers will less miss the films, which have always been well represented, inasmuch as the space saved gives emphasis to a story-symposium.

The phrase may seem a misnomer, for at first sight it may appear that the stories, from different generations and different countries, have little in common. There would have been interest in that, as showing both the range of the medium and the scope of the writers. But we suggest that these stories from France, Greece, America, Ireland, Wales, India, England, share certain marked tendencies. It may be noticed that roughly half have themes of the country—though the authors do not necessarily live in the country. Roughly half, also, take their theme from childhood. In short, the authors of the best stories we have received are, unlike the poets, looking not so much forward as slightly to one side. They look there in order to go forward, once they have seen what is on either side; the poet of to-day tends to be catapulted forward by the shock of what is behind him. And often, just as we are expecting development, there is recoil. If the stories of those who are better known as poets—Marianne Moore, Dylan Thomas, Elizabeth Bishop—seem to refute this, we reply that their stories spring direct from their poetry.

Of the rest, it is noticeable that nearly all of them are set in the past. A story naturally tells what happened, and in that sense is in the past. But these, which we consider representative, are usually telling of someone living through something again. Not what happened, but what lay behind the happening. Some of them, such as *Death of Dan Boyle* and *A Kashmir Idyll*, are stories of action. Others are introspective. Both types may be concerned with sudden death. All are concerned with the past. The authors have something to get out of the way. They look to one side, to what happened, and having seen that, they can go forward. When at the end, Dan Boyle is dead; the waves receive their due; in Nova Scotia a sister has died; in India a Nawab; a London woman explains her husband's death—so that she may be free of it; and a child in *Snowtime* says, in effect, "so that's why I couldn't eat the pudding"—then, not only a story has been related; something has been resolved.

The authors, having successfully come to terms with what was there before them, can go forward.

Pudney's story alone is not in the past. But its tense is conditional, and not present. *If* an elephant walked into your house. And, at the end, the Albions are left laughing—they will always laugh at what happened once. The end of the story is, in each case, not the fall of the curtain, but the rise. The end may be said to be the beginning. In short, whilst the poem shows signs of replacing the pamphlet, to-day's story seems—to us—to be offering the outlet of the old subjective lyric.

That is our personal opinion. Others may find other tendencies. But if we are asked, that is what we find, after reading manuscript, galley and page-proof, in these apparently dissimilar stories. None of them was commissioned, and though many writers sent us (we hope) their best when they heard of the symposium, we came by these stories in the ordinary way of mail-reading. Some have been held over from previous numbers; some of which we write may, at the last moment, be held over from this. There are others, which arrived too late to be printed before June. But by and large, in this as in other numbers, the stories which we find printable, be they by new or well-known writers, seem more and more evidently linked—not by a conscious delight in the past, but by a deliberate desire for a future to be reached by knowing what is behind. In narrative, by removing someone, watching so-and-so develop, saying that was bound to happen, that is why this never did. The difference between prose and verse—not a singing to the sun, but (without disrespect to our authors) a discussion in the dawn, to be ready to greet that sun. A resolving of questions rather than a cheerful answering.

We may be wrong, and it matters little if we are; the stories need no apologia. We mention only our impression on collecting—repeating that each story was chosen separately, as it came in. The next number will emphasise articles on people and places—for those coming to London and about those they have left. Canada, Africa, Poland, Czechoslovakia are already represented; negotiations are afoot for a story by Kafka, and an essay (on marionettes) by Heinrich von Kleist. We are happy to announce an article by Melita Schmideberg; the distinguished Viennese analyst, Stefan Hock, is preparing a paper; and a study of Georg Buechner, "the German playwright, who, in the nineteenth century, wrote Communist tracts before Marx," is in process of translation. The Paris Exhibition will be celebrated by Bryher's reminiscences of that of 1900, and we hope, by June, to have obtained from Ellen Wilkinson the contribution her journey to America prevented her from writing for this issue.

NEWS REEL

WELCOME, if—to our thinking—rather wild, criticism has made unusual demands on our space. Therefore, in this number only, both Editorial and News Reel have been reduced as much as possible. We would have cut the News Reel altogether, but there were certain facts it seemed incumbent on us to record. As it is, it is of a nature different from usual, and if this results in a certain lack of gaiety, we feel that is more than made up for by the spate of abuse printed under the heading of Correspondence.

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RALPH FOX

HERE we wish chiefly to join those who have already paid tribute to Ralph Fox. He was killed, early in January, fighting to defend Madrid and, with it, what that fight has come to stand for. His friends have written and spoken of him from end to end of England. It is, however, a comment on our times and our tastes that the death of a man who embodied so completely the chosen English tradition of courage and fair play, should be passed over in silence by many newspapers. The churches and schools ask continually for men who will put duty in front of happiness, justice before gain. This was what Fox did, when he went out to the trenches. He has written several books, including a *Life of Genghis Khan*, and had others in preparation at the time of his death; one of these, *The Novel and the People*, we shall review in our next number. It is tragic to think that a man who might have had great influence on England should have been killed so early in his literary career. We offer his family and friends deep sympathy, though words seem useless compared to his deeds.

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A NEW ADELPHI

WITH its December number, the old *Adelphi* ceased publication. The reason, we are informed, is that “the financial support of the last seven or eight years has ceased.” But the magazine is not to die; a new *Adelphi* consisting of thirty-two pages will be supplied, by post only. The old having failed in financial support, the new seems prepared to do without it. A prospectus says that if subscription is impossible or difficult, one may receive the magazine regularly for a year. “You will pay when you can . . . it is necessary for us to work on the basis of a complete mutual trust.” Ourselves, we find quite enough mutual trust involved in obtaining the money for copies already sold. But then, we do not attempt to live by faith alone. We find it

difficult to live by any slogan, so that we raise an eyebrow, rather than a benedictory finger, at the line "Political Socialism, as understood and practised to-day, is in unconscious league with the forces of Death." The new *Adelphi* is out for a "Socialism that places responsibility once more upon the individual . . . and since real belief creates belief, we have no fear of the outcome." Publication will be in the hands of Rayner Heppenstall, who "can't expect" us "to have any intellectual sympathy." We therefore merely draw attention to a gesture, our opinion of which we reserve, and state that the magazine can be obtained from the Adelphi Centre, Langham, Essex. The prospectus says that the centre "has been described as 'the parent house of a new monastic colonisation of England.' That is possible." We think most things may be. At any rate, it gives some indication of the spirit of the magazine, and we shall watch its progress with interest, as well as curiosity.

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CIRCISSIAN CIRCLE

CARS. Commissionaires barring the way. A crowd on the floor. A man shouting "Lights! We'll have that last bit again! And everyone is walking! Remember, like Felix, walking. Lights!" We might have been at Denham—*before* the New Year. But it was a rehearsal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society, which we had walked in on at the Albert Hall. On and on—or, in view of the dance, round and round—they went in "Circassian Circle," the men mottled with bells, the women winsome in sort of Gordon Craig not-quite-peasant-weaving, each team its own design, some of the new ones sadly reminiscent of Lilian Baylis lapses or, which amounts to the same, programme-sellers in arty "Little" theatres. The team we liked best was the Boxgrove Tipteers. This was not entirely unconnected with the fact that they are a gang of countrymen who meet weekly in a pub near Chichester; for folk-dancing can be so very "folk" that it is pleasant to have a bit of old and mild brought into an atmosphere more generally fumigated by cups of cocoa. The Boxgrovers had a genuine and spirited dance to the tune of "The Girl I Left Behind Me," and it was encouraging to find one felt, through the contrast of springing step and plangent music, the unsuspected melancholy of the military lines, "But I am bound for Brighton Camp, Kind Heaven preserve and guide me." Manxmen (sailors and fishermen of from sixteen to twenty-five) also made a good impression. We were interested to notice that the Swiss Cottage School for the Blind ran a "Kentucky Running Set"; and almost excited that the Girls' and Women's Organisations felt their most appropriate tune was "We Won't Go Home till Morning." We didn't wait to see who would take them, but we went back next night, to the

actual performance, even though the Rumanian visitors were dull and the stilt dancers from les Landes, despite their obvious advantages, weren't as exciting as the Basques of last year, which wasn't the Silver Jubilee Festival.

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BERNHARDT AND BRANDY

THERE is nothing quite like the movies. Of course, witness a porcupine, that is no reason for affection. Still, we fall for films. What other industry would invite us to a lunch so huge that the waiters could scarcely get round with the preliminary sherry, whilst we couldn't get to the Paramount visitors' book, to sign which, we felt was needed before we deserve it? What other trade would dye real carnations blue, or would screen, during the meal, one of the world's most important films, *Queen Elizabeth* (1912)=Sarah Bernhardt served between the fish and the entrée, lights only half-dimmed and chairs swivelled round? And then follow that with a tableau of the stars in Zukor productions, culminating anonymously, but by no means androgynously, with a nude of the abandon associated with non-stop variety? As several said, "At lunch-time!" And to be true to type, the lady, when photographed, "actuality," for the trade paper, put on a brassiere.

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" . . . AND SEE THE WORLD "

THE Press has lately been more remarkable for what it has not said than for what it has. Interesting, therefore, is it to observe what can be said. "A gun-team at work is a particularly pleasing sight . . . in actual firing, there is a splendid report and a burst of golden flame. . . . One and all regard it (i.e., the training) as 'real good fun,' and there is no doubt at all about their enthusiasm." This is taken not from a German or Italian newspaper, but from an English. It concerns London's "citizen gunners," and no one would wish to belittle those who give up their evenings to defence-training. But that "a visit to any of the headquarters or drill-halls of London's gunners" should be "a tonic experience" seems to us scarcely a reporting of event, and more of a stimulating of emotion. "Pretty things, the guns," said an enthusiastic N.C.O. "Interesting, too." But not nearly so interesting as the reason why certain papers are so enthusiastic about certain things. What with church-crypts as air-raid shelters and football clubs co-operating with the War Office to use their playing grounds for aerodromes, we shall soon have to print this periodical on paper suitable for use as respirators.

THEATRE NOTE

QUARTERLY publication makes it necessary for our dramatic articles to be as little tied to time and place as possible. But there are certain happenings in the theatre to which we feel it our duty to refer. We allude not so much to the success of *Murder in the Cathedral* assuring the future of the Mercury theatre, welcome as that news is. Nor do we wish to do more than record that in three successive productions Edith Evans appeared in *The Country Wife*, *As You Like It*, and *The Witch of Edmonton*. The point we wish to make is that at the same theatre, Laurence Olivier played "Hamlet," in its "eternity," not for a matinée or series of special performances, but for a run; that Mistress Evans herself is to appear in a Shakespeare season at the New; that two "Hamlets" are running in New York; *Much Ado* has been produced in a boxing-ring on the south side of the Thames, and that an Anglo-American project seeks to build a new Globe and, adjacent to it, a new Mermaid Tavern. These events have been announced since the writing of an article, "Shakespeare On The Screen," in which some mention would otherwise have been embodied.

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NEWS ON CONTRIBUTORS

THOMAS MANN, exiled from his country and his nationality confiscated by the German Government, has been made a citizen of Prosec, Czecho-Slovakia. A book by his brother, Heinrich Mann, will be published this spring by Martin Secker and Warburg. Arthur Calder Marshall, who has contributed to five out of our seven numbers, has hit the reviewers' headlines with his *Pie in the Sky*, reviewed in this issue by Mulk Raj Anand, who has best-selling royalties on *The Coolie* locked up in the U.S.S.R. Randall Swingler, another respected contributor, has published *No Escape* with Chatto and Windus. News comes from Africa that Frank Brownlee, author of *Kiviet and the Baboons* (No. 3), has had a book accepted by Allen and Unwin; and Willard Price, author of two articles in two numbers, and reason why one subscriber did not wish to have "such a coarse magazine about her house," has put out *Riptide in the South Seas*, reviewed in this issue.

CORRESPONDENCE

BAA-BAA, BLACKSHIRT

(To the Editor of LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY)

SIR,—So once more those who are interested in Literature have been cheated. Your *soi-disant* LIFE AND LETTERS has opened its foul mouth and from it there now issues the spit and froth of Communism, Semitism, Internationalism. Your editorial is nothing but the ghastly tripe we get from any daily paper any day of the year. So Oswald Mosley has managed to put the fear of God into the hearts of LIFE AND LETTERS and certain editors are scampering away into the safety of a "Literary" Journal where their hysteria can be given free rein. Well, well! What bravery! What guts! But, above all, what gross hypocrisy.

Yours in Fascism,

"Cheviot," Neasden Lane, N.W.10.

WILLIAM O'CONNOR.

[Fascists speak louder than words.—Ed.]

SOMETHING SHOULD BE DONE

(To the Editor of LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY)

SIR,—An article purporting to deal with Tyneside and written by Rhoda Hind appears in the December issue of LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY.

At one time this district was visited by people of her type seeking to paint the area blacker than it really was. In recent years, however, Tyneside has generally received fair treatment in the Press, and regard has been paid by writers to the industrial recovery in this area and throughout the North-East, the very substantial improvement in housing conditions and social amenities and the courage of the people in the hardest-hit parts of the North-East. Unfortunately, Rhoda Hind is not in that class, and appears to have come to Tyneside—if, in fact, she came at all—on a very foggy November day.

I am tempted to treat the article only with the contempt it deserves, but the broader interests of this area demand that the lies contained in Rhoda Hind's article should be definitely disposed of.

She says she imagined the Roman Wall manned again. Rhoda Hind appears to have imagined many other things. Newcastle, she says, is black. Because I am not a Novocastrian I may be credited with impartiality when I say that Newcastle is at least comparable with any other industrial city in England—Leeds, Bradford, Manchester, Derby, Birmingham, or Nottingham. It has one of the finest approaches that any city in the British Isles possesses—the Floral Mile traversing the Town Moor, which constitutes the northern approach along the Great North Road.

Miss Hind says there are bridges across the Tyne. "They are bridges

and no more." What does Miss Hind expect a bridge to be? The Tyne Bridge, opened by King George V, is a model of the great Sydney Harbour Bridge in Australia, whose magnificence has appealed to the whole world.

"Newcastle and Gateshead," writes Miss Hind, "grow upwards more or less steeply from the river. Their roots are there in the mud and from the mud they draw their life." In that phrase, striving after picturesque phrasing, Miss Hind has lost herself and truth.

Miss Hind quotes specific cases of hardship that is being endured in this area. Whether the circumstances she describes do, in fact, obtain here, I do not know, for like so many other picturesque writers, she refrains from giving chapter and verse. But, if her statements in these specific cases are true, there is still not the slightest justification for generalising and condemning the whole area.

"The prosperity of the country as a whole creeps up from 1931 to this year, but trade in the North-East has only fluctuated a few points. That must be accepted." Here, again, Miss Hind is writing without any knowledge of her subject. In the last twelve months alone, 20,599 people on Tyneside have found jobs, which means, if Miss Hind does not already appreciate that fact, 20,599 more wage-packets are going into 20,599 Tyneside homes. The reduction of unemployment in this area is greater than in any other part of the country, and let me anticipate Miss Hind's reply that this is due to the armaments programme. In part that is true, but by no means entirely. One firm alone is to-day on Tyneside employing 9,000 more people than two years ago. A £250,000 plywood factory is being built on Tyneside. A cable factory, a £400,000 flour mill, a £60,000 food factory are other developments here now. An announcement concerning further new industries on Tyneside will be made in the very near future.

Miss Hind asks: "Who or what can give these people the vision, the spiritual energy, to rise from their stagnation?" Certainly not Miss Hind.

Yours faithfully,

LEONARD FLETCHER,

Publicity Officer to the Tyneside Industrial
Development Board, and the North-East
Development Board.

Andrews House, Gallowgate, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 2.

[Rhoda Hind sends the following reply: "The opinions expressed in my article are undoubtedly debatable. Not so the facts. This also applies to Mr. Fletcher's letter. His facts and figures stand. They in no wise cancel mine."

We ourselves regret that the publicity officer to the Tyneside Industrial Development Board and the North-East Development Board should have been led by his indignation into errors of over-statement, not to say peevishness of tone, which accord ill with the cheerfulness of his message. We can only answer his insinuations with the assurance, which a fuller acquaintance with this paper would make unnecessary, that the article,

"purporting to deal with Tyneside," by Rhoda Hind, "if indeed she ever came there," would not have been published by us had we not first ascertained its authenticity. Mr. Fletcher, publicity officer of a board presided over by Lord Londonderry, does not know if the circumstances described by Rhoda Hind obtain in the district under his care. We would suggest it would have been more becoming to have found out, before writing to refute her so defiantly, if not definitely. But he seems more concerned with his Floral Mile. There is a Flower Walk in London; we do not find that it prevents distress in Dockland.

Mr. Fletcher leaves us to consider that, as he does not say how many are still left out of work, the mere increase in the number of those employed shows how many had previously been "enjoying" (no doubt with the aid of the Floral Mile—yet what is one among so many?—and the model of Sydney Bridge) "enforced leisure." Had Rhoda Hind no knowledge of the facts embodied in her article, we submit that she would not have been employed as she was, and we feel it proves the worth of her work that it should stimulate the publicity officer concerned to send us information which we should apparently not otherwise have received.—Ed.]

OUR MASTER'S VOICE.

(To the Editor of LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY)

SIR,—It has been drawn to our attention that in the Winter 1936 issue of LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY an article appeared headed "Televiewing," dealing with television apparatus manufactured by this Company, in which you have written as follows:

"By 1931, we had our own televisior and looked in as regularly as the hours of transmission permitted. Baird in those days sent out a weekly typewritten programme."

The word "Televisor" is the registered trade-mark of this company, and whilst we appreciate that you have used the word solely with reference to Baird apparatus, the manner in which you use it is somewhat unfortunate in that it gives the impression to anyone reading your article that the word is a common noun meaning any television receiver; the only correct use of the word is, of course, one which indicates that it is distinctive of a particular kind of television apparatus, namely, the Baird television apparatus.

Moreover, as the word "Televisor" is distinctive of Baird goods, it is really a redundancy of words to refer to a "Baird Televisor," and likely to lead to the incorrect inference that there are "Televisors" other than those manufactured by Baird's, and that the word "Baird" is necessary to distinguish the "Televisor" referred to from a "Televisor" of some other make.

We are, naturally, very anxious to avoid any misapprehension on the part of the general public as regards the significance of the word "Televisor," and as the Press are nowadays the greatest educators of the public, we think it desirable to write to you to explain the position, so that any articles which are widely read, such as that above referred to, should not convey a false impression.

We shall very much appreciate it, therefore, if in future, instead of referring to "a televisior," "the televisior," or "Baird Televisor," you

will refer to "a 'Televisor' television set" or "a 'Televisor' receiving set," these two expressions being equivalent respectively to the expressions, "a 'Baird' television set" or "a 'Baird' receiving set." The use of a capital T and quotation marks for the word "Televisor" is desirable as a further indication that it is a registered trade mark.

Yours faithfully,

Baird Television Limited,

R. E. LAYZELL, Secretary.

Greener House, 66, Haymarket, London, S.W.1.

[We are sorry our use of the word "Televisor" should not have come within the meaning here given to the term. We regarded it as a word in the English language, unaware that its use was confined to a commercial trade-mark. We will in future rectify this. But a "Televisor" television set seems to us rather more redundant than the phrase complained of, and the instructions for quotations and capitals make it altogether too difficult to refer to Baird apparatus. We shall probably wait till the part played in public life by television justifies our coining a word of our own (such as *Etherscreen*) and copyrighting that.—ED.]

KNOCK, KNOCK.

(*To the Editor of LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY*)

SIR,—I do not flatter myself that this letter will do more than mildly amuse or annoy you, if, indeed, you read it at all. For you must be a very busy person—so busy that you cannot find time to write your own Editorials. Or possibly you write them but are far too busy to correct them, or to worry about such a detail as writing English.

Having heard talk of LIFE AND LETTERS, I decided to take it for a year. I have only read the Autumn Quarter copy, but already profoundly regret my choice. I can bear the fact that I find most of the articles deplorably dull, for they may be more interesting to other people. The fact that the "poetry" is the worst that it has been my misfortune to read for months, and that the stories are, to my mind, rubbish is also bearable.

What I cannot bear is the deplorable English of your Editorial. On first struggling (I use that word literally) to read it, I thought your journal must be American. I then discovered it was worse—an English journal apeing Americanese.

There is so much faulty writing in your Editorial, such glaringly bad English as would not be passed in a fourth form essay, that over and over again the meaning can only be guessed at. I hardly think you need me to point out the places where lack of punctuation renders the meaning obscure, that three sentences in the first two paragraphs begin with "But," or that the second sentence of the third paragraph beginning: "Fascists . . . destroyed" offends two rules of grammar, and makes a *verb* of the *noun* "Feature" (a word which, incidentally, means, "the prominent traits of anything; the cast of the face").

It would give me satisfaction to correct the entire essay, but it would be a waste of valuable time. I am willing, however, to bet you anything

within reason, that I could condense your words into half the number without omitting anything essential to the meaning, and, at the same time, produce a perfect example of English which would be much easier and pleasanter to read than your effusion! On page 2 you refer to the International Association of Writers in Defence of Culture. I consider the crying need is for an Association of Readers in Defence of Writing. It is desolating to see the standard of English to which expensive magazines such as yours (presumably intended for educated readers) can sink.

May I recommend two books which would help you to write good English? Both are VERY elementary. *On the Art of Writing* by Quiller-Couch, and *What a Word* by A. P. Herbert.

In case you think I am a crotchety colonel or a pedantic school marm, I may mention that I am a so-called woman of "leisure" (age 29) with a strong love of literature and hatred of the slipshod writing that is debasing our beautiful language. Moreover, I think it is unfair on foreigners who might wish to read your magazine, to offer them such an intricate puzzle to unravel. In this opinion I am by no means unsupported

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

MARCELLA WYCLIFFE THOMPSON (Miss).

Trent Meadows, Puddletown, Dorchester, Dorset.

[We regret that neither the contents nor the style of this magazine appear to give our correspondent any very great pleasure, but we are delighted at the interest she takes in improving our English (or American?). We would be most happy to see a condensation of our Editorial which would be "a perfect example of English." We would hope, however, that it would not contain such solecisms as "a so-called woman of 'leisure'," when what is apparently meant is "a so-called 'woman of leisure'." It is kind of Miss Thompson to recommend books for our instruction. Our own authority is Webster's Dictionary. Might we suggest that a greater familiarity with it on her part would prevent her from cavilling at an admitted use of the word "feature," which is given both as verb and noun?—ED]

(To the Editor of LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY)

SIR,—I thank you for your charming missive of December 31st, which greatly cheered my awakening to the New Year, and, in fact, may claim the unique distinction of moving me to laughter at eight a.m. on that morning—the rest of my post consisting of bills and other unpleasant repercussions of Christmas. For your sake I rejoice that your two weeks' patient search was rewarded by the pleasure of finding a small "solecism" in my letter. I hate to dash your obvious satisfaction by explaining that the slight misplacement of an inverted comma was due to my faulty typing, in which art I do *not* claim to be an expert (while you, presumably, claim to be an interpreter of LIFE and LETTERS). Not being an Editor, I am, unhappily, unable to afford a typist. However, you might like to point out to yours that she spelt "noun"—*nown*, and "so-called"—*soe-called*.

According to your own authority, Webster's Dictionary, a "solecism" is a breach of syntax, or any impropriety. As my misplacement of a comma is obviously not a breach in *syntax* (the correct arrangement of words in sentences), I am forced to the conclusion that you accuse me of the latter enormity. I feel compelled, therefore, to place your letter in the hands of my solicitor.

I see that Webster's Dictionary certainly admits the word "feature" as a verb, but *only as a colloquialism* (therefore not admissible in an Editorial). Other equally reputable lexicographers do not even make this concession.

In case of misunderstanding, I would point out that I have been prevented from replying to your letter before this on account of a crushed right hand, which is only now beginning to "feature" without extreme pain. I therefore beg you to excuse my bad writing—not being an Editor I am unable to afford, etc.

I also beg you to accept this humble Sonnet with leniency, realising that it is the result of physical pain and that the many corrections I desire to make would necessitate my arm remaining in its sling for another week or more.

Yours truly and transcendently,*

MARCELLA W. THOMPSON.

* "Rising above" physical infirmity.

Trent Meadows, Puddletown, Dorchester.

To the Onlie Begetter of this Sonnet,

MR. R. H.

WHEN in the Session of Swcet Silent Thought

I muse regretfully on Life and Letters

I crave the passing tribute of a sigh

For those who are my Literary Betters;

Who yet can not discern a verb or noun,

Nor tell when sentences should cease their flow

And many a time begin them with a "But"—

Forgive me! I should say "*Commence*" them so.

Who camouflage their poverty of thought

And stultify ideas with verbal fetters,

While setting Johnson, Swift and Lamb at naught,

Claiming to mirror Life in English Letters.

How can we bid the Common Herd cease erring

When Helicon deutes us Robert Herring?

[Answer—First, by learning to pronounce our name; secondly, by giving the full title to the paper. We find on our carbon of the answer sent to Miss Thompson only one of the errors attributed to our secretary, and as Webster includes "absurdity" as one of the meanings of the debated word, we feel it would be a solecism to continue the correspondence. We offer Miss Thompson our sympathy over her right hand.—ED.]

AL MUTANABBI AND ARABIC VERSE

By W. H. STEPHENS

LONDON, in common accord with other centres of learning and culture throughout the world, last year celebrated the millenary of one of the greatest of Arab poets—one who was destined to win his way, however slowly, to the front rank of international poets; one whose work has but just *begun* to influence English poetry in its weakest part—that of metrical development.

As testimony to the quickened interest of English people in classical Arab works, we may note the fact that during October three receptions in honour of Al Mutanabbi were held in London. The first of these was held jointly by representatives of Arab-speaking countries, the Saudi Arabian Minister, the Iraqi Minister, and the Egyptian Chargé d'Affaires, at the Egyptian Legation, when appreciations of the great poet were made in both English and Arabic. The second reception was given by the President and Council of the Royal Asiatic Society, at the London Museum; and the third was held at the Royal Egyptian Club, when among the speeches there came an Interlude Play, in Arabic, by members who represented Al Mutanabbi and another poet watching the Sultan at chess with a famous grammarian.

The speakers at these receptions gave, in English and in Arabic, sketches of the career of the poet. Though son of a simple water-carrier, he managed to "get educated"; and then he became convinced that he had a prophetic mission to deliver to the world. The authorities, however, imprisoned him on account of his revolutionary doctrines; and thereafter he became convinced that he had a poetic mission to outshine all other Arab poets in the various glories of their art.

So in accordance with the usage of the times, he sought a patron of letters, and attached himself to the court of Sultan Seif-ud-Dowleh, at Aleppo. There his brilliant panegyrics earned his master's gratitude and his rivals' envy and scorn. These nicknamed him "Al Mutanabbi," the "would-be prophet"; and his admirers have ever since adopted the nickname as a term of affection.

For about nine years he managed to retain the precarious position of court favourite, but at length he was ousted by rivals who worked on the foibles of Sultan and poet till he fled to Egypt. There he tried to win the favour of Kafur, once slave, then Sultan; but Kafur proved to be a disappointment, for the negro did not value the poet's services at the poet's price. Thence he trekked to Baghdad, where he once more settled down; but when he paid a visit to Shiraz, he failed to return; he had met bandits on the way. Legend relates that as the poet was about to fly from the unequal combat with the brigands, his slave cried out: "Shall men say you fled from fight, you who said 'The horse, the night,

and the desert are my familiars, as well as the pen, the lance, and the sword'." Thus rebuked, he fought on; and, true to his creed, he died.

But he has left behind him a large body of work, which places him with, or above, other great poets such as Abu Nuwwas, Abu'l Atahiyeh, and other mighty men of genius among the Arabs. As for international rank, only those foreign critics who are obsessed by their own biased conceptions of international standards would seek to depose him.

Again, with regard to the character of the poet, there are varying judgments, according to bias in outlook on the ethical ideals of the time. He sought and begged for patronage, as did Johnson and Addison; he praised or cursed his superiors as they helped or failed him, as did Dryden and Pope; and so on. It is easy for critics to contrast his greatness of soul with a certain meanness of spirit; his calculating flattery with his rôle as mentor; his golden talents with his tinsel egotism; yet among all the temptations of voluptuous courts he is said to have led a clean life; and he shares with George Washington the reputation of one who "never told a lie."

The following ode was made by the writer of this article as a snapshot of the life of Al Mutanabbi, illustrating his points of circumstance, the character of his work, and the estimation in which it is held. At the same time it is intended to illustrate his own style, and to give examples of the daring imagery in which he revelled. Some of these may seem exaggerated to English readers not familiar with the conceits of Donne, for example, but they were current coin in the verse mart of the times; some of them may seem to be far-fetched, but they were never too far for an Arab to reach. Take, for example, the conceit in the last line, where the panegyrist suggests that the only tomb and monument worthy of Al Mutanabbi is "The Earth" as a planet!

MILLENARY OF AL MUTANABBI

(Metre : , - , - / , - , -)

A poet was born
To sing to us songs
And though he has slept
His music is still

in fulness of time
of beauty sublime
a thousand of years
the joy of our ears

His lyrics of camp
Of princes and courts
Of love and of hate
The halls of the world

of desert and field
of sabre and shield
ambition and scorn
of classics adorn

The gems of his thought
Emblazoned on flags
To waft from the east
His magic that flies

are ruby and pearl
the ages unfurl
on zephyr and breeze
o'er mountains and seas

Al Kufa is famed
His life is his verse

as crib of his birth
his tomb is "*The Earth*".

N.B.—Punctuation marks are not necessary in English verse of this type. They were unknown in Arabic until recently.

From translations of Arab poems into English one may gain a fair idea of subject and treatment, but only a misleading idea of the original metrical movement. This latter is owing, not to any lack of skill on the part of translators, but partly to our own poverty in metres, and partly to our unsound conception of those metres. We have but five standard metres as compared with the Arab sixteen; and even so we have been taught to suppose that the five classical metres were the foundation frames for English verse. But as these metres are based on the conception of classical "long and short" syllables, they are not suitable for English verse, for our "measures" are based on the conception of "Strokes and Flicks*," as alternations in the rhythms of English syllables. Under such handicaps, Arab metres are necessarily falsified; and the plain truth is that if an enquirer who knows nothing of Arab metres tries to "get the rhythm" of them from translations hitherto published, he will be led astray.

The foregoing ode is not a translation, therefore it does not suffer from one handicap; and it is a stroke-flick rhythm, therefore it does not suffer from the other handicap. Furthermore, it is made in one of the few Arab Metres which run well in English verse, as will be seen from the examples given below.

Arab metres were drawn from conversation rhythms, by ears that were far more alive to the subtleties of word sounds than were those of even the ancient Greeks. In Pre-Islamic days nearly all Arabs, men and women, were extempore versifiers (much as were most Englishmen in pre-Conquest days); and the most familiar of these rhythms were those that were timed by horsehoof, camelfoot, and anvil—those that ran well to themes of work and travel.

In Arab verse a short syllable consists of two sound-elements, a consonant and short vowel, such as *tā*; but a long syllable has three elements, two consonants divided by a short vowel, such as *tān*, or one consonant with a long vowel or diphthong, such as *lou*. Hence Arab verse comes in "short waves" of two specified values, which give an alternation suitable for beautiful melodies in perfect time. The significance of this is apparent when we consider that a *flick* in English has a range of one, two, or three elements, rarely more; as in *a*, *in*, *by*; whereas a stroke has a range up to seven or eight elements, such as *strengths*. (N.B. A long vowel counts for two elements, and *th* is a single sound-element.) Hence we cannot expect to find in English any

* For the new restatement of English Prosody, see *Elements of English Verse*. W. H. Stephens. (Macmillan.)

approach to the beautiful metrical timing that is possible in Arabic. If we add to the comparison the rarity of blunders in Arab verse, and the frequency of long-short blunders in English verse, the difference is still more invidious.

A glance at the following table of Arab metres will suffice to show that the Arabs were fond of double strokes and triple strokes, which are schemic throughout most of their poems. We should not, however, jump to the conclusion that Arab verse has a heavy movement, if we compare the lines in English with their Arab equivalents, for the average length (with weight of stress) for Arab strokes is as three compared with four for English strokes. But here the special interest for us lies in the fact that although double strokes and triple strokes have always been used as "accidentals" in our verse, they have never until lately been made schemic throughout a poem. Herein lies a great opportunity for the development of our own neglected technique in versification. As examples of what can be done in this opening, we may cite*, as of special interest to rising poets:

- No. 5. A poet was born / in fulness of time
 No. 2. What the *Day brings* / comes bethought
 No. 4. The delight of Youth / is the scorn of Age
 No. 7. *This land* is ours / *though oth-ers* come / (and go)
 — The wind is high / and *Fear flies* fast

RHYTHMS OF SIXTEEN ARAB METRES

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| 1. A long stroke / a long strong stroke | , - - / , - - - |
| 2. Stretching broad chests / straight for home | - , - - / - , - |
| 3. Spread wide the herbs / here and there | - - - , - / - , |
| 4. In a perfect mould / is the verse of Amr | , , - , / , , - - |
| 5. In fulness of time / a Poet was born | , , - - / , , - - |
| 6. A trilled loud voice / a sweet far sound | , - - - / , - - - |
| 7. Now trembling sore / now grumbling loud | - - - , / - - - , |
| 8. Running long hours / over parched sand | - , - - / - , - - |
| 9. Swift-footed gales / bring winter storms | - - - , / - - - , |
| 10. Flow ancient Nile / blessing tillage | - - - , / - , - , |
| 11. Light of soft wing / far speeds the dove | - , - - / - - - , |
| 12. He shares a blame / stirring all hearts | , - , / - , - - |
| 13. Shortened leisure / takes us from fields | - , - , / - , - - |
| 14. Pulled stubby tails / tell us weird tales | - - - , / - , - - |
| 15. Follow Fate / where it leads | - - - / - , - - |
| 16. A close step / will keep time | , - - / , - - |

N.B.—In some poems the above feet are repeated (in the same line) without variation; in others, with variation, which is schemic for the

* These poems are in *The Poetry Review*, March, May, 1935; September, November, 1936. I am now engaged in preparing a few score examples of other Measures. Perhaps other poets will join in this work of development.

whole poem; but all metres are subject to occasional variations, as a rule in scheduled positions in the line; and, in addition, to specific licences. Readers who wish to get an idea of the vast complexity of this unique prosody should glance at the *Grammar* of Wright or Palmer.

Any strangeness in the above lines is due to my having as a student made them as mnemonics to suggest the Arab rhythm and the name (e.g. *long, stretching*). Here, as distinctions of Quantity, an Arab long syllable is *represented* by an English *stroke* (a significative or root syllable), and an Arab short by an English *flick* (a relational particle or affix). For these distinctions see my *Elements of English Verse* (Macmillan).

The best period, the Classical Period, of Arab poetry dates far back to the times when the Angles and Saxons were invading, and settling in, our own country; and it continues to such time as our Mercian king Penda was fighting the final battles of heathenism against Christianity in England. It closes at the time when the Arab Prophet Muhammad began to fight the battles of Islam; and a convenient date is that of the Hegira, 622 A.D., which is the Year One of all Muhammadans throughout the world.

To this period belong the Seven Golden Poems; and these odes set the standard for later Arab verse. The ode was recited in half lines (like our own Anglo-Saxon verse), and it carried the same rhyme throughout, even when the poem ran to 120 lines. The poet was most careful in his opening line to give the normal metre, and to give the rhyme twice, so as to impress the standard on his audience. He might make certain variations from the norm, but only at specified positions in the line, so as to avoid stumbling of the tongue and perplexity of the ear; hence the rhythmic movement was always perfectly clear to both reciter and hearer.

As for subject matter, the early sections were a conventional prelude to the theme; the prelude might include sections of: Sorrow at the sight of the deserted encampment of a beloved; reminiscence of a love episode; description of a swift camel as a solace, to "eat miles of desert"; incidental episode, of natural scenery; after which the poet would abruptly turn to his theme, probably one of tribal triumph.

Without reflection, most of us would be inclined to condemn such verse as stereotyped and lacking in originality; but we should bear in mind the fact that the ambition of each poet was to excel his forerunner—to beat him at his own game. Arabs strove to excel in beauty of diction, as did the Latins; not in originality of thought, as did the Greeks. One consequence of this long-sustained attitude towards poetry was that although the Arabs can equal or surpass the combined anthologies of the lyrical poetry of all the countries of Western Europe, their dramatic output is far inferior to that of any one of them; so is their epic work.

Let it be understood at the same time that the Arabs had a start of many centuries, in some cases a millenary, before the classical period of

any of the modern languages of Western Europe. Furthermore, though the Arabs can boast that the purity and elegance of their own classical period is incomparably greater than that of any of these countries during their classical period, yet the Arabs began with the overwhelming advantage of an absolutely pure vocabulary and style, based on current *colloquial* forms of the period, without any foreign alloy. The range of thought for these pre-Islamic Arabs was extremely limited; their style of expression was extremely simple, but it had the advantage of becoming standardised for future generations in the purest Arabic.

Arab foreign conquests began about the time of the death of the Prophet, and they eventually extended from Central Asia to Morocco and Spain. During these conquests the uncultured tribesmen annexed not only the material, but also the intellectual resources of the Persian and the Eastern Roman Empires, also of Spain; and Arab culture actually developed European arts and sciences a few stages further.

For the sake of comparison, we may here pause to note that the purest age of English poetry is that of the Anglo-Saxon times; but the ecclesiastical invasion of England by the Latins, followed by the political invasion of the Normans, alloyed our vocabulary and our rhythms of speech to such an extent that in the Golden Age of English Literature (the days of Queen Elizabeth) our language had changed so much in vocabulary and sound (though not so much in grammar) that classical English (Anglo-Saxon) was too strange to be understood. Now it is studied in our universities as if it were a foreign language. But the Arab conquests (of other countries and other languages) resulted in no such disastrous change in Arabic. Pre-Islamic Arabic poetry is to-day read in the secondary schools.

The Arabic standard for prose will always be the Koran, the revelation vouchsafed to Muhammad, the "Seal of the Prophets," of whom Muslims acknowledge seven, the sixth being Christ. The Koran is Islamic in thought, but pre-Islamic in style; for the sayings of Muhammad were collected and arranged into "suras" by men who were born in the Classical Age. Hence the diction of both poetry and prose were standardised in the simplest and purest style of the best Arab period. The rhythms are similar, though in prose they are not patterned; their free rhythms run on as do those of our own free verse; in impassioned passages the prose is almost verse, especially when rhyming cadences are frequent.

The Koran is unique in world literature as being the only book in the world which is read daily in primary schools by young children with the same pronunciation as that of the original speech of thirteen centuries ago. One secret of this fact lies in the law that no copy of the Koran may be printed without the pronunciation marks of every syllable—and every syllable is phonetically written. Another is that an unbroken line of professional reciters has recited the Koran from memory since the

earliest times until now, with probably undeviating accuracy of expression. A third is that the Islamic sciences (Theology, Jurisprudence, Literature) have always based their style on that of the Koran.

As English suffered from alloy in its vocabulary after the Norman Conquest, so did Arabic after the Arab Conquests; and though both gained enormously in vocabulary* and in thought, both suffered in purity of diction; both became hybridised. Both had a Golden Age afterwards; Arabic in the time of Harun-er-Rashid and Al Mamun; English in the time of Elizabeth and James I. Arabic, however, had been already standardised for both poetry and prose; English has since been standardised for prose by the Bible, but its poetry has not been, and cannot yet be standardised by any poet or any body of verse, for its metrical development is still in its infancy. But is standardisation advisable, or possible for us? That may involve arrest of development.

One curious effect of standardisation may be noted for guidance. *The Arabian Nights* is not a "classic" in Arabic, although it is so in most of the European languages into which it has been translated. In style it falls far below the Arabic standard; for although it is based on the current colloquial phrasing of its time (as was the Koran in *its* time), yet the Arab Conquests had led to a debasement of the colloquial style, much as the Norman Conquest had done for English.

Since their Golden Age both English and Arabic have had minor periods of efflorescence and decay; both are now on the eve of a renaissance. In England, reaction against the Great War stimulated revolutionary thought in every department of intellectual and social interest; and the lashing attacks of insurrectionist free-versers has at last aroused our "makers of verse" into a determined effort to develop and discipline our metrical resources; in other words, to make new patterns for our own verse which may give adequate expression to the movements of our social revolution. In the Muslim world the violent urge towards independent nationalism is throbbing through the hearts of both cultured and uncultured folk; and it is finding expression in pen and sword; but the first surge of every outburst of violence is the old conviction of Al Mutanabbi:

"The Sword is more telling than the Pen."

Recently the developments of modern science in foreign countries have brought into Arabic another vast influx of foreign words, thus further hybridising the language. The Arab translators of European science-manuals found it easier to adopt the foreign ready-made terms than to form new Arab words from the old roots, plentiful and adequate

* So vast is this vocabulary that no Arab Professor can know his own language as comprehensively as an English Professor knows his. For example, the names for *camel* and *horse* run into hundreds. Hence one can understand why it is normal for professors to have a dictionary on the table during even *viva voce* examinations. Yet the professors had had, as students, a normal working day of 10-14 hours!

though they were. Again, the development of journalism on European lines is already modifying the written and spoken sentence; and political dynamic is already stamping the new phrases as sterling coinage. But much as, in spite of similar verbal invasions, our Anglo-Saxon vocabulary and grammatical forms of speech are still to-day the basis of our speech, our prose, and our verse, so will classical Arabic remain the basis for future colloquialism and literature. The Arabic of to-morrow will look different in printed garb, but not in genius, from the manuscript of the Koran.

THAT FOUR-FLUSHER PROSPERO

By GEORGE GARRETT

“ As I told thee
Before, I am subject to a tyrant:
A sorcerer, that by his cunning hath
Cheated me of this island.”

(*The Tempest*, Act III, Scene 2.)

SO Caliban described his master over three centuries ago, yet many people still regard Prospero as the “personification of goodness.” A careful reading of *The Tempest* should quickly dispel that impression.

The first scene of Act I is the deck of a sailing-ship caught in a storm near the coast of an island in the Mediterranean. The boatswain awaits instructions for his men.

MASTER: “ Speak to the mariners: fall to it yarely,
Or we run ourselves aground: bestir, bestir.”

Much crashing of thunder increases the distress of those aboard ship. Sopping mariners rush about. “ All lost! ” they wail. “ To prayers, to prayers. All lost! ” Old Gonzalo, the counsellor, is particularly alarmed: “ The King and prince at prayers,” he cries. “ Let us assist them, for our case is as theirs.” From within the cabins come agonised yells of despair: “ Mercy on us. We split, we split! Farewell, my wife and children! Farewell, brother! We split, we split, we split! ”

Right away it is made clear that a king and prince are aboard the sinking ship. It is important to remember the prince for he becomes the chief reason for Prospero’s scheming behaviour during the next three hours which cover the action of the play.

The second scene is on the island where we are introduced to Prospero and his daughter Miranda, now aged fifteen and marriageable. This is in keeping with the custom of that period. Miranda, having seen the wreck, is very upset and is appealing to her father:

“ If by your art, my dearest father, you have
Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them:
The sky, it seems, would pour down stinking pitch,
But that the sea, mounting to the welkin’s cheek,
Dashes the fire out. O, I have suffered
With those that I saw suffer! A brave vessel,
Who had no doubt some noble creatures in her,
Dash’d all to pieces. O, the cry did knock
Against my very heart! Poor souls! They perish’d.”

In spite of her anxiety, she is told by Prospero: “ There is no harm done.”

THAT FOUR-FLUSHER PROSPERO

“ I’ve done nothing but in care of thee,” he says.

(Of thee, my dear one! Thee, my daughter.)

(We can imagine the old schemer saying to himself: “ Be patient, girl. Daddy has a big surprise for you. A real live prince! For you’re a princess, my dear, my dear, and soon you’ll be Queen of the May.”) Whether this is so or not, he decides at last to tell Miranda, who has lived on the island since she was three years old, who and what she really is: “ The hour’s now come.”

“ Twelve years since, Miranda, twelve years since
Thy father was the Duke of Milan, and
A prince of power. . . . And his only heir
A princess.”

Miranda, quite naturally, is eager to know what foul play has brought them to this island. Prospero, in a long speech, explains how he, being wrapt in secret studies, entrusted the management of the state to his brother, Antonio. Antonio was not long in getting in on the “ graft.” Prospero, while not exactly calling it that, very aptly describes the condition:

“ Antonio . . . Having both the key,
Of officer and office, set all hearts
To what tune pleased his ear; that now he was
The ivy, which had hid my princely trunk,
And suck’d my verdure out on’t.”

Eventually Antonio becomes ambitious enough actually to believe he is the duke. His next move is to dump Prospero as far off as possible. In this he is assisted by the King of Naples. Prospero tells Miranda how the conspirators did their job:

“ A treacherous army levied, one midnight
Fated to the purpose, did Antonio open
The gates of Milan; and i’ the dead of darkness,
The ministers for the purpose hurried thence
Me, and thy crying self. . . .
In few they hurried us aboard a bark;
Bore us some leagues to sea; where they prepared
A rotten carcass of a boat, not rigged,
Nor tackle, sail, nor mast; the very rats
Instinctively had quit it; there they hoist us,
To cry to the sea that roared to us; ”

Cast adrift in this dangerous plight, they were enabled to survive through the risky kindness of the noble Gonzalo, who, as Prospero admits:

“ food and water
Out of his charity (who then being appointed
Master of this design) did give us; with
Rich garments, linens, stuffs, and necessities

Which since have steaded much ; so, of his gentleness,
Knowing I lov'd my books, he furnish'd me,
From my own library, with volumes that
I prize above my dukedom."

Prospero has not exaggerated Gonzalo's gentleness. He is that and more. Shakespeare rightly termed him "the honest old counsellor." We can fully appreciate his generous treatment of Prospero. In return we'll see how Prospero slyly tortures him almost to the end of the play.

Miranda is anxious to know more about Gonzalo: "Would I might ever see that man," she says.

This is an awkward request for Prospero to grant before his own secret planning of Miranda's future is properly under way. So he evades the question and wafts her to sleep. Miranda is at an impressionable age and likely to fall in love with the first well-dressed chap that crosses her path. It might just as easily be the jovial and friendly-disposed Stephano as Ferdinand, the King's son. A lot depends on who comes first. Miranda judges by externals: "Caliban is a villain she does not love to look on." (Act I, Scene 2.) Against this, compare her instant pleasure on seeing the group of well-groomed courtiers in Act V:

"How many goodly creatures are there here!
How beauteous mankind is! O brave new world
That has such people in it!"

Amongst those people are Sebastian, who but an hour since had conspired to kill Gonzalo and her prospective father-in-law; also Antonio, her false uncle, one of the "bad sons her grandmother's good womb had borne." Prospero proves his astuteness in having her meet Ferdinand first:

"This is the third man that ever I saw," she says,
"The first that ever I sigh'd for." (Act I, Scene 2.)

And Prospero comments: "They're both in either's power." He ought to know. He has deliberately arranged that to happen. We are given the hint beforehand:

"I find my zenith doth depend upon
A most auspicious star, whose influence
If now I count not but omit, my fortunes
Will ever after droop." (Act I, Scene 2.)

Quite true. Prospero, through his magic art, is staging a come-back. He intends to return to Milan as the duke, but first making sure that Miranda is wedded to Ferdinand, the king's son. All this must be definitely settled within three hours.

Prospero is a fast worker. Though he aims high, he cannot possibly lose. The power is in his own hands. The manner in which he abuses it fully confirms Caliban's condemnation. Prospero is a tyrant, a sorcerer, and cunning. We find ample evidence of his viciousness in his first conversation with Ariel:

PROSPERO.

“Hast thou, spirit,

Performed to point the tempest that I bade thee?

ARIEL.

To every article.

I boarded the King's ship; now on the beak,
 Now in the waist, the deck, in every cabin,
 I flam'd amazement: sometime I'd divide
 And burn in many places; on the topmast,
 The yards, and bowsprit, would I flame distinctly.

. . . Not a soul

But felt a fever of the mad, and play'd
 Some tricks of desperation. All but mariners
 Plung'd in the foaming brine, and quit the vessel,
 Then all afire with me.”

“There's no harm done,” Prospero has twice told Miranda. If the scaring of helpless people to such an extent that they believe hell is let loose is no harm, what is? A thunder and lightning storm at sea is a horrifying experience. Adding a fire to it is an act of fiendishness. “In every cabin I flamed amazement.” Everybody on the wrecked ship must suffer accordingly. They do, or why would they “plunge in the foaming brine”? The rest of the fleet, believing the king's ship lost, are bound sadly home for Naples. What matter, so long as all this suits Prospero's purpose?

The king's son has been landed by himself “cooling the air with sighs.” As Prospero is pleased with the report, Ariel considers this an opportune moment to ask for his own liberty, which had been promised a year back.

“I pray thee,

Remember, I have done thee worthy service;
 Told thee no lies, made no mistakings, serv'd
 Without grudge or grumblings: Thou didst promise
 To bate me a full year.”

He soon discovers whether ungrudged services or promises mean much to Prospero. The one word to rile that old tyrant is “Liberty.” Its effect here is immediate. “My brave Ariel” becomes “moody,” “malignant,” and a liar. Prospero raves on:

“If thou more murmur'st, I will rend an oak,
 And peg thee in his knotty entrails till
 Thou hast howl'd away twelve winters.” (Act I, Scene 2.)

Very quickly Ariel begs pardon and disappears to carry out his master's bidding. Prospero wakens Miranda:

“We'll visit Caliban my slave, who never
 Yields us kind answer.

MIRANDA.

’Tis a villain, sir,

I do not love to look on.”

O Caliban! Why weren't you born with a prettier face, a sprinkle of

blue blood, and an introduction to a smart tailor? As it is, Prospero admits you are some use:

"We cannot miss* him: he does make our fire,
Fetch in our wood; and serve in offices
That profit us. What, ho! Slave! Caliban!
Thou earth, thou! Speak. . . .
Come forth, thou tortoise . . . Thou poisonous slave
Got by the devil himself upon thy wicked dam, come forth."

Surely this is the scurrilous language of a bully? No wonder Caliban curses back.

CALIBAN. "As wicked dew as e'er my mother brush'd
With raven's feather from unwholesome fen
Drop on you both! a south-west blow on ye,
And blister you all o'er.

PROSPERO. For this, be sure, to-night thou shalt have cramps,
Side stitches that shall pen thy breath up; urchins†
Shall, for that vast of night that they may work,
All exercise on thee: thou shalt be pinch'd
As thick as honeycombs, each pinch more stinging
Than bees that made them." (Act I, Scene 2.)

Although this means for Caliban an unmerciful plaguing from "hedgehogs that lie tumbling in my barefoot way, and mount their pricks at my footfall," he is still defiant. He resents being exploited. He cannot forget that Prospero has cheated him out of the island: "I must eat my dinner," he replies.

"This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother,
Which thou tak'st from me. When thou camest first,
Thou strok'dst me, and mad'st much of me; wouldst give me
Water with berries in't; and teach me how
To name the bigger light, and how the less,
That burn by day and night: and then I lov'd thee,
And show'd thee all the qualities of the isle,
The fresh springs, brine pits, barren place, and fertile;
Cursed be that I did."

Thirty years before *The Tempest* was written, Drake had voyaged around the world, finding native races that were "tractable, free, of a loving nature, and without guile or treachery." (Fletcher.) In some places, they regarded Drake and his men as gods, showing them the "fresh springs, the barren places and fertile," and loading them with gifts. Nearly a century before, Columbus had recorded identical experiences.

Shakespeare, on coming to London only a few years after Drake's return, was bound to hear of the many escapades, and be somewhat

* Miss = do without

† Urchins = hedgehogs

impressed. Another point that suggests he drew from this source is the reference to Caliban's mother, Sycorax, who was banished from Algiers to the island.

" This blue-eyed hag was hither brought with child,
And here was left by the sailors." (Act I, Scene 2.)

Drake's chaplain, Francis Fletcher, mentions an incident on the Moroccan coast. " During the time of our abode at this place our General (Drake) being ashore was visited by certain of the people of the country who brought down with them a woman, a Moor (with her babe hanging upon her dry dug, having scarce life in herself, much less milk to nourish her child) to be sold as a horse or a cow and a calf by her side."

We know how Daniel Defoe converted the castaway Alexander Selkirk into the story of *Robinson Crusoe*. Was it not just as easy for Shakespeare to mould that Moor woman into a play as a witch? These were the days of witchcraft in England, when any poor woman " grown into a hoop," crooked and bent, was liable to be burnt or banished. " A witch and her freckled whelp " would be villains to the same theatre audience that would readily accept the sorcery of a Prospero and be gulled by him.

Caliban was gulled. " Wouldst give me water with berries in't " is the clue. We find it confirmed later in a speech of his to Stephano who, too, " has made much of him " and set him drunk.

" I'll show thee every fertile inch of the island,
And I'll kiss thy foot: I prithee, be my god.
. . . I'll show thee the best springs; I'll pluck thee berries,
I'll fish for thee, and get thee wood enough."
(Act II, Scene 2.)

This speech contains the gist of the last few lines spoken earlier to Prospero and quoted above. Trinculo, who happens to be present the second time Caliban so willingly volunteers his services, calls him weak-minded, credulous, puppy-headed, and ridiculous. His opinion seems a correct one in the light of Caliban's further speech to Stephano:

" I prithee, let me bring thee where crabs grow;
And I with my long nails will dig thee pig-nuts;
Show thee a jay's nest, and instruct thee how
To snare the nimble marmoset; I'll bring thee
To clustering filberts, and sometimes I'll get thee
Young scamels from the rock." (Act II, Scene 2.)

These are all delicacies, the acquiring of which will entail plenty of labour. Yet Caliban will risk the dangers, too. His open nature makes him easy to exploit. Prospero has long since taken advantage of it to become the sinister ruler of the island. Caliban is his slave-prisoner. " You sty me in this hard rock, whilst you do keep from me the rest of the island." Exactly; he exists to be bawled at and tormented.

“Thou most lying slave,” (roars Prospero)
 “Whom stripes may move, not kindness! I have us’d thee,
 Filth as thou art, with human care; and lodg’d thee
 In mine own cell, till thou didst seek to violate
 The honour of my child.” (Act I, Scene 2.)

Now this appears black against Caliban. How much he is to blame we do not know, but turning over a few more pages, we find the innocent Miranda thrusting “bashful cunning” aside and offering herself to a man she has met but an hour since. (Act III, Scene 1.) Further on, in Act IV, Scene 1, Prospero warns Ferdinand about “breaking the virgin knot before the holy rites are ministered.” Ferdinand swears that the “most opportune place shall never melt his honour into lust,” yet a few moments later Prospero has to warn him again:

“Look, thou be true; do not give dalliance
 Too much the rein; the strongest oaths are straw
 To the fire i’ the blood: be more abstemious,
 Or else, good night your vow.” (Act IV, Scene 1.)

No more warnings are necessary, for Ferdinand has previously suffered at the hands of “gentle” Prospero, “crabbed and composed of harshness,” to repeat his own words. (Act III, Scene 1.) If the cultured Ferdinand has to be restrained, there is some excuse for Caliban. He is not debarred on account of his colour. Miranda is destined to accept an African for her brother-in-law. (Act II, Scene 1.) But the brother-in-law is a king, not, like Caliban, a forced slave. Therein lies the difference. Once again he is threatened for answering back:

“Hagseed, hence!
 Fetch us in some fuel; and be quick, thou wert best,
 To answer other business. Shrugg’st thou, malice?
 If thou neglect’st, or doth unwillingly
 What I command, I’ll rack thee with old cramps;
 Fill all thy bones with aches; make thee roar,
 That beasts shall tremble at thy din.” (Act I, Scene 2.)

Caliban is terrified. “No, pray thee,” he pleads, and goes off. Miranda during the whole of the scene has made no effort to stay her father’s threats. To her, Caliban is only the man-of-all-work; the fellow that lights the fire and brings the wood; the dishwasher. He’s certainly no handsome prince. Prospero will have nothing less for his little girl. So the invisible Ariel entices Ferdinand in. Miranda at first thinks he is a spirit.

MIRANDA. “I might call him
 A thing divine; for nothing natural
 I ever saw so noble.

PROSPERO (*aside*). It goes on,
 As my soul prompts it.”

Of course it goes on. No modern matchmaking mother could hope to do the trick so well. Prospero beams. "At the first sight they have changed eyes," says he. And, later on: "It works." Could anything be more simple? But he has all his wits about him. So that his plan will not appear too barefaced he inflicts a few heart-pangs. To this end, he tells deliberate lies. They're not the first; they won't be the last. He has lied to Miranda about the wreck: "There's no harm done." He who has caused the wreck and had Ferdinand brought in front of him, now charges the prince with being an impostor and a traitor:

". . . . thou dost here usurp
The name thou ow'st not; and hast put thyself
Upon this island, as a spy to win it
From me, the Lord on't."

Ferdinand, stung by these lying insults, draws his sword, is immediately disarmed, and is ordered off to a task of wood-carrying, much to the dismay of Miranda, who blurts out her sympathy:

"Be of comfort;
My father's of a better nature, sir,
Than he appears by speech; this is unwonted,
Which now came from him."

She seems to have forgotten that only a few minutes ago Prospero had behaved much worse towards Caliban.

In Act II, Scene 1, we become better acquainted with Gonzalo, "the honest old counsellor." He beseeches the king and his company to be merry over their lucky escape:

"Our hint of woe
Is common; every day some sailor's wife,
The masters of some merchant, and the merchant,
Have just our theme of woe."

But the king is too grieved over the loss of his son, whom he believes drowned. Gonzalo tries to brighten the atmosphere by changing the topic of conversation. He talks about how ideal matters would be if he were king of the island:

"All things in common nature should produce
Without sweat or endeavour: treason, felony,
Sword, pike, knife, gun, or need of any engine
Would I not have, but nature should bring forth,
Of its own kind, all foison, all abundance
To feed my innocent people."

Utopian, perhaps, but something to reflect on. Shortly afterwards, Ariel sneaks in and causes Gonzalo and the king to drop into a deep sleep. "They fell together, as by consent; they dropped as by a thunder-stroke." In this comatose condition they are exposed to a murderous conspiracy against their lives by Sebastian and Antonio, the same Antonio "that would not let twenty consciences stand between him and

Milan." Why Prospero should connive at this is not too clear at first. If it is merely to prove what wicked cut-throats Antonio and Sebastian are, we already know. That is, at least, one good reason why Gonzalo should be protected from them. Actually the situation favours Antonio's grabbing ambition. "O that you bore the mind that I do," he says to Sebastian. "What a sleep were this for advancement!"

Just as they are about to plunge their swords into Gonzalo and the king, Ariel re-enters:

"My master through his art foresees the danger
That these his friends are in; and sends me forth,
(For else his project dies) to keep them living."

There is more than gallery play here. There is craft behind Prospero's timely intervention. He has quietly placed his friends in danger, but with a flourish pulls them out again. Why? "For else his project dies." His project is to land in Naples as soon as possible for the marriage of Miranda and Ferdinand. Throughout the play he stresses it. It is almost his last word.

"Now, 'tis true,
I must be here confined by you,
Or sent to Naples. . . .
Gentle breath of yours my sails
Must fill, or else my project fails,
Which was to please." (*Epilogue*.)

Please whom? Prospero first, and then the public accustomed to a happy ending. They don't mind a few strings being pulled. But there are limits. The murder of Gonzalo would cause an outcry against Prospero's base ingratitude; the murder of the king would completely ruin the show. It would be too patent then that Prospero intends his daughter to be the queen of Naples.

Prospero is not so crude. He won't spoil a good thing. If by popular consent Miranda can't become the present queen of Naples, Prospero will see to it that she becomes the next. It pays him to keep Gonzalo and the king alive, "for else his project dies."

That the old schemer can hardly control himself we've seen earlier. "It goes on as my soul prompts it." "At the first sight they have changed eyes." "It works." Listen to his comments after he has heard the two "darlings" confessing their love to each other:

"So glad of this as they, I cannot be,
Who are surprised with all; but my rejoicing
At nothing can be more." (Act III, Scene 2.)

That's frank enough. Ferdinand and Miranda may be surprised, but Prospero is not.

"Now does my project gather to a head:
My charms crack not: my spirits obey; and time
Goes upright with his carriage." (Act V, Scene 1.)

In fact, everything is hunky-dory. And here's more of it after he has revealed his identity to the king, who is yet a bit dazed.

ALONZO. "If thou be'st Prospero

Give us particulars of thy preservation:
How thou hast met us here, who three hours since
Were wrecked upon this shore; where I have lost,
How sharp the point of this remembrance is!
My dear son, Ferdinand.

PROSPERO. I rather think,
You have not sought her help; of whose soft grace,
For the like loss I have her sovereign aid,
And rest myself content."

Rest himself content, to be sure. It's all plain sailing now. He has nothing to lose. But when the master and boatswain are brought in moping, and the latter relates how after "several noises of roaring, shrieking, howling, jingling chains and more diversity of sounds, they awoke to find the ship in trim full," the king, already suspecting there is trickery afoot, is compelled to speak his mind:

"This is as strange a maze as e'er men trod:
And there is in this business more than nature
Was ever conduct of: some oracle
Must rectify our knowledge." (Act V, Scene 1.)

To which the wily Prospero gives ready answer. "Don't be vexed over all this strange business," he says. "At picked leisure which shall be shortly, and when you are alone, I'll explain everything." That picked leisure will be when he has retired to Milan after "the nuptials of these our dear-beloved are solemnized." That is, once the "project" is crowned, the dream come true. His bit of philosophising does not seem so ambiguous now:

"We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep."

The realisation of that dream is Prospero's uppermost thought. As a consequence, there is scant consideration for the sensitive old creature Gonzalo, who suffers a succession of shocks that are piled on without remorse or apology.

He is dragged through the storm described by Miranda and Ariel (Act I, Scene 2). His life is again exposed to danger in Act II, Scene 1, where he awakens with a start:

"Tis best we stand upon our guard,
Or that we quit this place: let's draw our weapons."

In Act III, Scene 3, we find him sore and aching:

"By lakin, I can go no further, sir," he tells the king.
"My old bones ache; here's a maze trod, indeed,

Through forthrights and meanders. By your patience,
I needs must rest me."

Completely exhausted by his devotion to a grief-worn father, he sits down, a likelier prey than ever to the murderous Antonio and Sebastian. In this helpless predicament, he is one of the party tantalised by the appearance of a sumptuous banquet which is just as suddenly whisked away to the accompaniment of thunder and lightning. Ariel, as the harpy, cannot be blamed for what occurs here or elsewhere. He acts entirely on Prospero's instructions, being complimented each time. "Bravely the figure of the harpy thou hast performed," he is told on this occasion.

There is no sympathy for Gonzalo in his rude disappointment. Instead, Prospero gloats over the misery of those in his power, then hurries off to supervise a delightful spectacular masque that will enchant young Ferdinand and further advance the "project." Ferdinand is also entertained to some Prosperian wise-cracking:

"The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve
And, like this unsubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind." (Act IV, Scene 1.)

All very beautiful and true. But if Prospero sincerely believes this, why does he persist in persecuting his helpless captives? There is only one answer. He is a tyrant, a bully, a demon. He is chockful of vanity. Every move he makes is to show what he can do. Nobody can stop him. He is a selfish old rascal, otherwise Gonzalo would not be left as in one instance to worry over the king, who in his despair talks of suicide.

"Therefore my son i' the ooze is bedded; and
I'll seek him deeper than e'er plummet sounded,
And with him there lie mudded." (Act III, Scene 3.)

There's no peace for Gonzalo. To the last act of the play we see him suffer.

"His tears run down his beard, like winter's drops
From eaves of reeds." (Act V, Scene 1.)

Later on he is driven to declare:

"All torment, trouble, wonder, and amazement
Inhabits here: some heavenly power guide us
Out of this fearful country." (Act V, Scene 1.)

Prospero, at hand again, hears this. Does he rush forward to comfort the old man? He does not. Consistent in his hypocrisy he embraces the king first. The "project" is the prime consideration.

Where Gonzalo can be so ill-treated we expect little respite for Caliban. He has been longer at the mercy of Prospero, hence his haunting fear:

"His spirits hear me,
And yet I needs must curse. But they'll nor pinch,
Fright me with urchin shows, pitch me i' the mire,

Nor lead me, like a fire-brand, in the dark
 Out of my way, unless he bid them; but
 For every trifle are they set upon me:
 Sometimes like apes, that mow and chatter at me,
 And after, bite me; then like hedgehogs, which
 Lie tumbling in my barefoot way, and mount
 Their pricks at my footfall; sometime am I
 All wound with adders, who, with cloven tongues,
 Do hiss me into madness." (Act II, Scene 2.)

Kind, gentle Prospero? His plaguing spirits adopt every conceivable shape. That is why Caliban is afraid at first sight of Trinculo, the shipwrecked jester:

"Here comes a spirit of his and to torment me
 For bringing wood in slowly: I'll fall flat,
 Perchance, he will not mind me."

Trinculo, approaching nearer, thinks Caliban a washed-up fish; on closer examination, maybe a dead Indian. Stooping down, he opens Caliban's long gaberdine frock, and is satisfied he is a man: "This is no fish, but an islander that hath lately suffered by a thunderbolt."

Stephano enters next, drunk and singing. Caliban, more afraid than ever, trembles all over. Stephano, staring at him, thinks he has a touch of ague or else is in a fit, and offers him some sack to drink: "Open your mouth," he urges. "Here is that which will give language to you, cat; open your mouth; This will shake your shaking, I can tell you, and that soundly; you cannot tell who's your friend."

Were ever words more appropriate than these to Caliban in his present frightened condition? He can hardly contain himself. "That's a brave god," he says, "and bears celestial liquor: I will kneel to him." Caliban is evidently prepared to serve anyone who will treat him with kindness. Prospero does not do so. It is not surprising then that Caliban welcomes a chance to rid himself of such a master, and in his place put Stephano, the hail-fellow-well-met. Stephano being agreeable, Caliban tells him wherein lies Prospero's power:

"Remember, first to possess his books; for without them
 He's but a sot, as I am, nor hath not
 One spirit to command." (Act III, Scene 2.)

"Without his books he's but a sot as I am." Caliban is on sure ground here. Despite his bitterness against Prospero, he wishes no harm to Miranda and impresses this on Stephano:

CALIBAN. "And that most deeply to consider, is
 The beauty of his daughter; he himself
 Calls her a non-pareil: I ne'er saw woman,
 But only Sycorax my dam, and she;
 But she as far surpasseth Sycorax,
 As greatest does least.

STEPHANO.

Is it so great a lass?

CALIBAN. Ay, lord; she will become thy bed I warrant,
And bring thee forth brave brood." (Act III, Scene 2.)

There is no indication here that Caliban has designs on Miranda for himself. Prospero is the person he is dead against. Surely he has been provoked often enough. Why should it be wrong for him to free himself from such a tyrant, yet right for that tyrant to play his diabolical tricks on friend and foe alike? After a lapse of twelve years he shows no sign of moderation until the last act, when Ariel tells him of the prisoners.

"The King,

His brother, and yours, abide all three distracted,
And the remainder mourning over them,
Brimful of sorrow and dismay, but chiefly
Him that you term'd, sir, 'That good old lord Gonzalo.'"
(Act V, Scene 1.)

He orders Ariel to release these prisoners the while he remains invisible. As they stand herded together, he gives them a final look-over before lifting the spell:

"A solemn air, and the best comforter
To an unsettled fancy, cure thy brains,
Now useless, boiled within thy skull." (Act V, Scene 1.)

What awful punishment he must have inflicted on Caliban! Anyway, at last he seems to be softening. Let's see what happens next. Still invisible, he forgives the king: the "project" demands that; also Sebastian and Antonio, "whom to call brother would infect my mouth." All their past and recent crimes are reviewed. He has forgotten nothing:

"Most cruelly

Didst thou, Alonzo, use me and my daughter:
Thy brother was a furtherer in the act:—
Thou'rt pinched for it now, Sebastian,—Flesh and blood,
You, brother mine, that entertained ambition,
Expell'd remorse and nature; who, with Sebastian
(Whose inward pinches are most strong)
Would here have kill'd your King; I do forgive thee,
Unnatural though thou art."

There's no mention of the attempt to kill Gonzalo; he doesn't matter very much. The King does, being directly bound up with the success of the "project." Prospero underlines its importance when he reveals his identity and speaks in an undertone to Antonio and Sebastian:

"My brace of lords, were I so minded,
I could here pluck his highness' frown upon you,
And justify you traitors: at this time
I'll tell no tales."

"The rarer action is in virtue than in vengeance," Prospero has mouthed earlier, so he doesn't breathe a word about their recent plotting. All their treachery is forgivable.

But one thing is not forgivable: that is, for a robbed slave like Caliban to dare organise a revolt against his cruel taskmaster. Prospero is enraged at the very idea of it. Near the end of Act IV he suddenly apologises for interrupting Ferdinand's enjoyment of the masque.

The latter turns to Miranda. "This is most strange," he says. "Your father's in some passion that works him strongly." Miranda is likewise staggered. "Never till this day," she replies, "saw I him touch'd with anger so distempered."

When they have gone, Prospero asks Ariel about Caliban and his new associates: "Where didst thou leave these varlets?"

ARIEL. "I told you, sir, they were red-hot with drinking;
 . . . Then I beat my tabor,
 At which, like unback'd colts, they prick'd their ears,
 Advanc'd their eyelids, lifted up their noses,
 As they smelt music; so I charm'd their ears,
 That calf-like, they my lowing followed, through
 Tooth'd briers, sharp furzes, pricking goss, and thorns
 Which enter'd their frail shins: at last I left them
 I' the filthy mantled pool beyond your cell,
 There dancing up to the chins, that the foul lake
 O'erstunk their feet.

PROSPERO. This was well done, my bird;
 Thy shape invisible retain thou still:
 The trumpery in my house, go bring it hither,
 For stale* to catch these thieves."

The trap is set. The gaudy garments are hung out on the clothes-line to tempt three drunken men who have been steeped up to their chins in a filthy-mantled pool. Trinculo is loudly indignant at his own nasty condition. Both he and Stephano take the dry clothes that have been deliberately placed there for them to take. Caliban does not want any of the "trash."

Suddenly the barking of dogs is heard. Divers spirits in the shape of hounds rush in and are set on Caliban and the others by Prospero and Ariel.

PROSPERO. "Fury, Fury! there, Tyrant, there! hark, hark!
(Caliban, Stephano, and Trinculo are driven out.)
 Go charge my goblins that they grind their joints
 With dry convulsions; shorten up their sinews
 With aged cramps; and more pinch-spotted make them
 Than pard or cat-o'-mountain." (Act IV, Scene 1.)

* Stale=decoy.

Fury and Tyrant! How those two dogs truly reflect the Prospero we now know.

In the last act Ariel re-enters, driving in Caliban, Stephano and Trinculo. There is no open forgiveness for them. Instead, there is open ridicule. Their offences are made public property. Unlike the King, Sebastian, and Antonio, they don't wear the old school tie. Prospero shows that very distinctly.

PROSPERO. "Mark but the badges of these men, my lords,
Then say, if they're true:—This mis-shapen knave,
His mother was a witch; and one so strong
That could control the moon, make flows and ebbs,
And deal in her command, without her power.
These three have robbed me." (Act V, Scene 1.)

Robbed him! What a piece of barefaced lying! Is it possible after this to believe any longer in that fraudulent old hypocrite? To the end he exploits Caliban, addressing him with contempt:

"Go, sirrah, to my cell;
Take with you your companions. As you look
To have my pardon, trim it handsomely."

So Caliban goes back to his dish-washing. It is a pity he did not know at that moment that Prospero had abjured his magic and was about to leave the island. He could have heartily wished him "a dish-washer's farewell."

THE WORLD WHEAT SITUATION

By E. F. BRAYHAM

THE price of wheat and the price of bread during the year just turned have been the topic of much discussion. Wheat values have soared to levels highest since the boom years of 1928-29, and with the abandonment of the gold standard by the European *bloc* the price of bread has also risen in different countries. In order to trace, however, a true picture of the past events, it might be well to place the broad facts of the world wheat situation on the table. It is barely three years since the world wheat problem was so acute that almost a third of the entire world-crop had to be carried over into the next season. Prices toppled over and a conference of world's surplus wheat-growers—Canada, Australia, Argentina, and the Danubian countries—was called to devise plans for reducing the acreage under cultivation until the surplus was worked off. Prices in the meantime dropped to uneconomic levels. For instance, in Canada a ton of sawdust realised \$10.00, while a ton of wheat was then selling at \$9.00. Farmers in the Middle Western United States were actually burning their wheat to avoid harvesting costs. In England, a British Cabinet Minister was rash enough to state publicly that "dollar wheat will be no more." That is to say that wheat will never again sell at a dollar per bushel in North America. (At that time wheat was standing at \$0.50, while now it is well over the dollar mark.)

This situation was brought about by generally declining consumption of wheat all over the world, while acreages were steadily increasing and widespread mechanisation of industry brought about an abnormal unemployment roll. This was further accentuated by an international economic landslide which in a short time proved how true it was that "everything that went up had to come down sometime."

The united efforts of the surplus-wheat producers failed, however, to produce the desired effect. More and more wheat was being carried over until last year, when Nature stepped into the breach by providing adverse atmospheric conditions and within the period of a few weeks transformed the ugly picture of excessive carry-overs into a rosy one of elegant sufficiency. Owing to last season's crop failure in the Southern hemisphere, and due to some Central and Southern European crops being subject to unseasonal weather during seeding, growing, and, in some parts, harvesting times, the world awoke to face a new picture of world wheat.

When this fact became generally known, those American and Canadian farmers who had sold "futures" wheat against their forthcoming crops had to cover, since they had not enough to deliver; therefore this was

followed by a speculative interest which until lately had been dormant in the commodity markets of the world. It may be added, however, that at present there are no large gambling wheat interests left in North America since the Cuttens and Livermores have passed by, and the stringent rules now applicable to wheat speculators in the Chicago "pit" make it difficult to engineer "pools." The comparatively smaller fry cannot readily engineer "pools" as, according to recent legislation, transactions have to be disclosed. None the less, those speculators who were busy juggling stocks and shares during the past two years are now taking an interest in the commodity markets, since, with an advance in the price of wheat and the general rearmament plans in being, it is felt that other commodities would share a prosperity which, according to North American forecasts, is now once again actually round the corner.

For 1936 it is estimated—provisionally—that the world wheat production, excluding Russia and China, of course, will have been the smallest for fourteen years. The supply available is given at six hundred and seventy-six million bushels, while the absorption by those countries that normally import would be over five hundred and fifty million bushels, thus leaving one hundred and twenty-five millions—barely two per cent. of the world production, against about twenty per cent. in the preceding season, and more in the years previous to that. This season's carry-over would be the lowest recorded for over twenty-five years—that is to say, since pre-war days—when Canada, at present the world's largest surplus exporter, was then considered to be a negligible factor in the wheat market.

Such countries as France, Italy, Germany, and Spain, which from time to time sold wheat in the world's markets, have been precluded from offering. In the case of Italy, Abyssinia and bad weather has brought about a shortage of five per cent. in the wheat crops, which she is replenishing from Canada. France estimates a decrease of somewhat over five per cent. in its wheat yield. This must be filled from the Danubian countries. Germany reports that her rye, barley, and wheat crops are three per cent. below her annual requirements. Holland, Belgium, and Greece have also smaller crops, and Spain, owing to its civil war, has lost much of its grain crops. Russian grain offerings have this year been conspicuous by their absence from this market. This is doubtless due to the Far Eastern tension, and to the fact that a greater degree of industrialisation has brought about an improved standard of living via the bread route.

A country which has loomed large in the wheat orbit this season is India. At a price of over thirty-two shillings per quarter (five hundred lbs.) cost, insurance and freight delivered to Liverpool, Indian wheat could be imported at a profit. How much more profitable would this be when wheat can be sold at thirty-eight shillings per quarter (its present level over forty) for India. Therefore, India is reported to have released

about fifty million bushels of wheat to this country. To India, wheat is a cereal which can be readily replaced with rice, for wheat-flour is at the best of times a luxury, and there are no less than a dozen pulses and cereals grown in India which can be adopted when wheat is not available.

In a normal season, the United Kingdom imports about one hundred and seventy-five million bushels of wheat, two-thirds of which have generally come from Canada, because the hard wheat grown there is needed to mix with the home-grown and the softer wheat imported from Australia. Great Britain's wheat consumption annually approximates somewhat over two hundred and thirty million bushels, while she grows about fifty million bushels despite the fact there are almost sixty thousand farms in this kingdom with more than three hundred acres each.

Over a period of years, millers in this country have pursued a hand-to-mouth policy in wheat importations, owing to world marketing conditions patent. Ten years ago, between sixty and eighty per cent. of Canadian wheat was utilised for British-made flour. This, however, dropped to between ten and twenty per cent. owing to misguidance on the part of the deceased Canadian wheat-pool, which sought to raise prices. With a return to a normal marketing policy, the Canadian wheat content in British-made flour has during the past year exceeded fifty per cent., and this, given a continuance of a sane selling policy, might further increase.

The wheat position prevalent in Canada is of positive interest to us, since we are by far the biggest buyer of Canadian wheat, and over the past two decades, during which time that Dominion became a serious factor in world wheat, sales of Canadian wheat alone have equalled the entire revenue of the Federal Government. Australia and Argentine have not increased their wheat-acreages to the same extent as Canada has added to hers. In twenty years the acreage under wheat in the three prairie provinces has almost doubled and has been the backbone of their economic vigour. It must be realised that the Canadian prairies are largely suitable for wheat. Diversification has been tried, but climatic and irrigational difficulties have precluded expansion in this direction. Mechanisation of the farm has played its part in developing for wheat, areas hitherto inaccessible. Therefore, further additions in the wheat-acreages of Western Canada may be anticipated. Mechanisation has been the panacea which Western farmers have often prayed for as weather conditions patent during harvesting seasons cannot now do the damage they used to when the harvester-thresher was unknown. Storage of wheat in Canada has been at the head of the Great Lakes to facilitate its movement outward.

Since stocks of wheat in Britain are usually small, rarely exceeding six weeks' supply, and owing to the general preparation for the avoidance of the next war, this country (in line with others in Europe) is contemplating storing supplies of grains which may not be forthcoming in

the event of hostilities. With this in view the Minister for Defence has announced that the erection of commodious underground granaries, preferably along our Western coast, is advisable. In this way, it is anticipated that at least six months' wheat supply, if not a whole year's, from Canada, Australia and the Argentine would be made available.

Such a procedure would incidentally help to stabilise the price of bread in this country for a year at least instead of leaving it to the vagaries of the weather or the grain-speculator. It is interesting, however, to know that although we are chiefly dependent upon wheat from outside, the price of bread here is cheaper than in any of the Dominions, while the quality is as high as that of any other country. In the accompanying table I have given the price of bread for a loaf of 2 lbs., the quality, consumption of wheat per caput annually in bushels, population in millions, and average 1933-35 production in million-bushels of the countries named.

<i>Country.</i>	<i>Price</i>	<i>Quality.</i>	<i>Consumption.</i>	<i>Population.</i>	<i>Production.</i>
Argentina	3d.	Wheat	5 9	10·9	223 0
Poland	3½d.	„	1 9	30·0	76 0
Great Britain ...	4½d.	„	5 7	40 1	49 7
Irish Free State . . .	5½d.	„	6 7	2·9	4 1
Australia	5½d.	„	7 2	6·3	155 8
Bulgaria	5½d.	„	5 9	5 7	47 6
Canada	6d.	„	10 1	9·7	276 7
France	6½d.	„	5 1	41·0	326 6
South Africa	7d.	„	1 6	9 5	15 2
New Zealand	7½d.	„	5 4	1 6	7 8
United States of America	8d.	„	5·1	120 7	542 7
Czecho-Slovakia . . .	2¾d.	Mixed	4 3	14·5	61·7
Hungary	4d.	„	5·6	8·6	78 3
Jugoslavia	4½d.	„	4·3	13 4	76 0
Turkey	4¾d.	„	5·8	14·5	97·0
Austria	6d.	„	4·0	6 7	14 5
Greece	6d.	„	4 8	6·3	28 3
Germany	6½d.	„	2 8	64·0	181 4

The above data provide a reasonable index for both the cost and standard of living in the countries given, since bread is the main staple food among Western nations and as such its price shows the trend of the cost of living, while the wheat consumption and type of bread indicate the standard of living among the European countries.

In all the countries of the British Commonwealth, bread made with wheat flour is the rule, while, generally speaking, on the Continent mixed bread-flour is used and prescribed by the respective governments in order to reduce importation of wheat. Poland and Germany, it would be observed, have, by Herculean efforts, managed to live on the wheat locally produced, but in the case of Poland only through a very much reduced standard of living route, while in Germany by an almost equally low standard and mixed bread flour. The countries shown as

using "mixed" flour bake bread in which wheat is but a constituent, rye, buckwheat, barley, beans, peas, potatoes and rice flour being other components; the actual composition is prescribed by the government with an eye to the home yields of the various cereal and vegetable crops.

In the case of Russia, where the world's largest harvest is annually garnered, the price of bread varies widely. In fact, its quality and composition are under government control, but the average consumption given at 4.2 bushels per capita is rather higher than expected. With a growing degree of industrialisation in the U.S.S.R., the consumption of wheat may be expected to expand. This, however, is the reverse of what has happened in the United States. That country, being the second most industrialised country of the world, has over the past decade shown a declining consumption of wheat per capita.

In India the price of bread varies widely and no standard loaf exists such as we know it. Consumption is put at 0.9 per capita, which is only just higher than Japan's 0.7. Both these countries, along with China and South Africa, are large consumers of rice owing to the small percentage of European inhabitants. Cost and standard of living for the natives are low in these countries while they are very high comparatively for the white man.

The high price for bread in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and the United States is due to the control exercised by these nationals to give the farmer "a fair deal," and a sliding scale of duty exists either to keep off or keep low the importations of wheat. In the case of the United States, the duty on wheat this season has been materially reduced, since that republic is short of fifty million bushels of wheat which she has been replacing from Canada.

To show how other countries endeavour to keep low wheat consumption, it is apposite to state that in Greece it is actually illegal to sell bread unless it is twenty-four hours old. In Brazil, the authorities, having grown tired of annually dumping half a million bags of coffee-beans into the Atlantic, have found a new use for it. Coffee, ground and made into a paste, is adapted with wheat flour for bread-making, and the result is said to be at once both nourishing and stimulating.

Out of the present wheat crisis one query looms large: whether the three-years-old agreement among surplus-producers to restrict acreage would be observed this Spring? In the light of present conditions it is doubted if Canada, Australia or Argentina could reduce their wheat areas. In fact, according to available information, the Argentine's acreage has been increased by forty per cent., while the Australian yield is somewhat lower than last year. In Canada, the wheat crops successively have proved to be the most valuable media for producing and circulating money. The withdrawal of the Damoclean sword of excessive carry-overs for five years would necessarily mean a

reversion to increasing acreage. This would entail development of new areas, as it is notorious that parts of the Dakotas in the United States, having been so intensively cultivated for wheat during the past twenty years, are becoming almost a desert prairie. Parts of the Canadian prairies would likewise be affected. Last summer, conditions prevalent in parts of the Dakotas and adjoining territory were not unlike those obtaining when the Egyptians omitted to put back into the Sahara a part of what cereals were taken out of it in the way of nourishment, with the result that the soil of these storm-swept areas was soon whipped into sand.

It is obvious therefore that larger acreages would be put under wheat in all countries this Summer, not only for gain but for security in the event of hostilities. With the possibility of Australia reconciling her differences with Japan and renewing her wheat exports to the Nippon, very little wheat from the Antipodes would be available in Europe. To add to this situation, let us consider the probability of at least fifty million bushels of wheat being acquired by our Minister of Defence for reserves here. At this juncture it is apparent that whatever wheat will be produced during 1937-38 season, almost all is destined for either consumption or reserves in various countries; and thus wheat in company with all other commodities will no longer be subjected to any restriction schemes owing to the change in the political and economic outlook of the world.

LOVER AS FOX

DRIVEN, at midnight, to growth, the city's wistful turnings
lead you living on islands to some dark single house
where vacant windows mark increased pursuit,
chasing the runner outward beyond bounds
around the wildest circle of the night.

Circling returns! the city wreathed in rivers,
streaked skies surrounding islands of blank stone—
into this mythic track travelling breakneck,
a streaming furnace of escape, you, fox,
pursued, brick-red and vicious, circling bricks,

are followed as nimbly all mottled cloudy night;
fastened upon your path, the Floating Man
face down above the city, as shadow, changing shape,
as shadow of clouds, flying, and swiftly as
indifference running mad around the world.

Speed now! see city, houses across the water,
mosaic and bright over the riverfall
remote from the bursting eye, the open nostril,
flared lip (an image of angels singing speed),
caught in a nightlong visionary chase.

See the entire scene bright as you fly
round lots pauper all year, shacks lame with weather,
this sour fertile time teeming and ramshackle
before you, loving, clean sight in spyglass air.
And around town again. River, river.
Why do people live on islands?

MURIEL RUKEYSER

COLDER, WITH VARIABLE WINDS

WHO neglected the toys of children,
Spurned the lights around the Christmas tree,
Preferring the flicker on the farthest shore
Glinting, and glancing and beckoning me,
And have turned away
Because I could not invent a reality
Where the light was never the light of day,

Now find the wished-for summer a maze of snow,
My blood thin and my sleep
Troubled by irresponsible prophecies.
Sometimes on waking I weep
But the sobs are a child's, the tears freeze
On my lips heavy with the pledges I did not keep.
Cowering I wait as everywhere skies
Red, crowded with cries,
Flash accusation, leaving an expanse of death.

Upon the water mirroring my myth
A swan, indolent and blind, circles, circles
In the delirium of the falling snow.

T. C. WILSON

THE SONG OF THE NIGHT EXPRESS

FOR he chants of the wheels,
Of the wheels revolving, revolving;
Of the places where he was sojourning, sojourning,
As he listens to grumbling discs returning, returning:
In his mind run thoughts evolving, evolving.

Wheels rotating fast rumble
As he dreamily thinks of the faces,
Of the faces with features now growing dim, growing dim,
That he has left behind him, behind him,
With the lengthening of those infernal places.

Like a crow to his country,
His homeland retracing, retracing
His intangible flight from exile, from exile;
As with listening ears he sits rooted the while
To the metal tune of wheels replacing, replacing.

And to himself he mutters:
I am coming home, coming home,
I am homeward departed, homeward departed,
For the train that is taking me home has started, has started,
To meet flesh of my flesh beneath the station dome.

TEO POH LENG

WALES ON THE MAP

(To Bryan Elliff)

FOR crisake shut up you and your druid delights
 blotting the arthuriana finals of one's cup
 the viking silences over three-splintered seas
 the troubadour's wayside joys on season ticket nights
 as historic Norman voice meets Keltic chronicler's lip.

Send pussmoth crashing my unearthed thoughts of bards
 the hammer of our fake professor adds not to folk-lore
 the exhaust of the eisteddfod nonconformist
 is robot flesh to injections, gipsy rennet that curds
 the special area the commissioner's art missed sore.

Send home my sackcloth miners shipwrecked in the Strand
 where political odds are not the joke they're at home
 or where faces at the windows duplicate
 faces early-old bending over moleskin without end
 the freed grit from each lever sud of Time.

The heraldic past is the catalogue ting-a-ling
 the syphilis graph often comes as a bethlehem gift
 crinkling the factory bones reading racing papers
 and still the shrouded voice of nostalgic themes sings
 on to diminishing gorsedd returns but no night-shift.

The privileged missionary efforts of engaging buccaneers
 the autograph hunting of negroes bearing grocer names
 the sunken empire markets for Rhondda anthracite
 the stacked-up chiming almanacks of Sir Alfred Mond
 point to the jazz pattern, a class-clash after straw rugger games.

Still *sospanfach* always beats the national anthem
 still the red demo is scientifically policed
 spanish conscious of the thunder of law and authority
 regulating with the banker's idea of art and rhythm
 the prizecard choir, a brass band after disaster mortuary laced.

In and out of the dance hall go the Valley girls—a film
 followed by bible-class thighs in pressed dungarees
 laundering the sixpenny entrance in the half-cut lights
 that promise cramped love in squalid adventurings
 a lorry-hop heaven like a Jubilee excursion to London.

At twilight to-night the No. 2 pit are holding a Lodge vote
the owners too have got together to counter-protest
the trout are restocking the polluted river
the silicosis-sensitive have barb-wired the anti-vivisectionist tote
and their new advertisement shines with an affiliation crest.

Ah Wales! your map is ribbed with living crossbones
(my inward revolt limned in tears)
shunting crematorially despite the green incestuous laugh
that blares and socks the oakgrown culture for Europe
the by-pass message configurating the slag-heap moans
the passive contour throttled by a fictional rendering.

KEIDRYCH RHYS

TWO POEMS

WEYMOUTH MANOEUVRES, 1936

WHERE on the night a stain of light
runs over, there shudders the fear we dread;
the beam that lightly runs over the sky
is death—is a searchlight overhead.

BADAJOZ TO DORSET, AUGUST, 1936

TELEPHONE wires cry in the wind
and make song there. I stand in the misty night
and listen. Hear voices from a far distance;
hear sounds from further, outside the wires,
than ever inside. Hear sounds from Spain.
The mist muffles all but these; blankets perhaps the reply—
But the wind plays the wires still, and the wires cry.

VALENTINE ACKLAND

THE ISLAND OF LEWIS

COME, leave your busy haunts, and lend,
Attention, true and Highland—
List to my song in simple praise
Of this romantic island.

Like some huge battleship, it rests
Out on the heaving ocean,
Whose storms it breaks with such defence—
It moves me to emotion.

From north to south, from east to west,
It is one dream of beauty,
And to o'erlook its countless charms
Would be neglect of duty.

Its haunting lochs, sweet heather moors,
Are gifts of God and mammon;
Its rivulets and murm'ring streams
Are stocked with trout and salmon.

I know not most where it excels,
In valley, stream or mountain,
But of this truth I'm very sure—
Of youth it is the fountain.

And in the seas that swirl around
Are fish, fine, fat, and plenty,
In which it passes other isles
As forty passes twenty.

A strong and sturdy, handsome race,
With rich and pleasing voices;
The people have true hearts of gold
In which the soul rejoices.

W. HALLIDAY

THE BEES

By JEAN PRÉVOST

(Translated by Petrie Townshend)

THE doctor's maid opened the door of the waiting-room. Doctor Cuvelier wiped his glasses, blinked and smoothed out his wrinkles by making a little grimace. The smell which came from his assembled patients prevented him from enjoying a deep breath; he turned his head away and called out in a low voice: "Next, please."

All the patients, hampered in their movements by their Sunday-best, vaguely shrugged their shoulders; the worn-out slippers of the women, the tight boots of the men, shifted on the carpet: all looked at a woman who blushed, got up, went into the consulting-room and turned back awkwardly as though to shut the door herself. "Leave it, madame."

The patients, sunk again in their waiting, sighed; the door shut itself with the same sigh; the doctor also sighed before beginning again, with his habitual gentleness.

"Sit down . . . that's right. Well, madame?" The patient looked more than forty: there were some grey streaks among the brown of her hair, white at the temples; the thin face with the large, straight nose looked strong and healthy, her hands, as she took off her gloves, were vigorous, but the woman was slow in answering.

"Well, doctor, I am married . . . that is to say . . . not exactly. But look here, I want to know. . . ." She choked in her rapid stammering and reddened. The doctor saw on her regular and hard features the change of look, the heavy lower lip, the expression both animal and astonished:

"You expect a child? Lie down so that I can examine you."

In order not to embarrass the patient, he turned away to his instruments, then came back. The woman shut her eyes, submitted to the examination with modesty and fortitude; her fingers shook. When the doctor raised his head his patient's eyes were shining, widening, only awaiting his first word to begin crying; he almost smiled.

"No doubt of it, madame; it must have been two months since you began to suspect it. Certainly it is the first one, but all the same. . . Well?"

The tears began to flow, running down the cheeks, after each tear fell a look shone out, anxious and radiant at the same time.

"It is true, then? It was not too late? Tell me, he is only as yet a tiny little bud, but could it hurt him if I am knocked about?"

"Certainly . . . if you can avoid it."

"Oh, yes, doctor, I can run away. But that is not all; I must tell

you: I spat blood when I was a child. You don't think that could hurt him, too?"

The doctor sounded her, and also found some marks of blows.

"You could not stop work till the child is born? I should prefer it."

"I cannot; it would be necessary to ask the father." She uttered the word with difficulty and disgust. "But I am a typist, and I can find a post almost in the country, at Mayenne. I have my certificate. I can work at corrections while lying down."

"I should like you," said Cuvelier, "to come back to Paris a fortnight before the birth. It would be better for you, and it will be necessary to inoculate the child at once against tuberculosis."

"A month's holiday, that is possible, but I don't want the child to be born in a hospital. I have two thousand francs."

"Do you know the Good Shepherd? I am *accoucheur* there. I will try to see to it myself."

"Really, doctor? Thank you. I will get away from the man and write to you. . . ."

With burning cheeks and shining eyes, she paid proudly, then shook both the doctor's hands and went out very upright, and a little breathless.

"Poor old maid," Cuvelier said to himself. "Here is certainly an adventurous maternity."

He wiped his glasses and in his resigned voice called: "Next, please."

* * *

Ten days later he received a letter from Mayenne: Mademoiselle Alberte asked him for a régime, what to eat? What to do to prevent morning sickness? At what hour to take her walks? She already had her *chaise-longue*, slept well, went to bed early. "They would not catch her again." Cuvelier, guessing that it would please her, regulated every minute of her day, down to forbidding her salt on her eggs. And every month he received a letter full of reassuring news, with a stamp for a reply.

Spring went by, and "the little bud," as Mlle. Alberte called him, was well aired, well exercised, well nourished. When his time to be born drew near, the doctor arranged with the clinic of the Good Shepherd, and recalled the old maid.

He came to visit her. She was already in bed, the brilliance of her eyes worried him, and he sounded her carefully; reassured on that point, he thought it necessary to say:

"For the sake of the baby, do not get too excited."

"But I don't stir, doctor. I eat well; I knit without hurrying myself, for all the clothes for the first three months are finished already. I am so very obedient, it wouldn't be fair if anything happened to us."

Two days afterwards she sent for him at the same time as the *accoucheur*. They met at her bedside and were made anxious by her convulsive smiles, by her disturbed silence.

"No, no, madame. Cry, groan. Clenching your jaws won't help at all."

She spoke, she shivered, and Cuvelier never forgot that hoarse voice full of enchantment.

"Come, come quickly. It is you, my beloved. Do not kill me; you have only me. Only think of him, doctor—only of him, of him. No, do not put me to sleep. I want to see him at once. Yes, come, come."

* * *

The *accoucheur* left. Cuvelier remained with one of the nurses. The mother recovered her voice and murmured humbly:

"Can I see him?"

More understanding than the strict and severe nurse, Cuvelier took the child in its wrappings.

"Do not move your arms, madame. Kiss him—yes, a boy."

"He is quite red. That will go, will it not? And his eyes? Ah, the drops—those are put in as a precaution? They have pinned his little sleeves to his robe with safety-pins. . . ."

More alive in the mother's face than her wet eyes, the thin nostrils of her long nose quivered and grew pale. She chattered anxiously:

"He has all his fingers? And the toes on his two feet? I should have liked to count them. The two little arms match exactly. He will not squint—he will be beautiful."

The nursing sister interposed her black arm between the mother and the child. Mlle. Alberte pressed her lips together, wept two heavy tears and slept.

"You must soothe her nerves. Don't cross her," said Cuvelier.

This nun was an excellent sick nurse who would kill herself with zeal, but the too different fervour of the old maid placed a high wall of suspicion between them. Cuvelier came again the next day to see the first attempt at giving the breast. He saw again in Mlle. Alberte's face, pale with enthusiasm and with fear, the brilliant eyes which made him anxious. He could not say anything to reassure her; he had no more confidence than she in that thin bosom. They put the baby in its mother's arm, its mouth close to her breast.

"He isn't red any longer, my little one—he is beautiful." As soon as the child felt the warmth of his mother against his heavy little head, he fell asleep. The nurse had to smack him through his wrappings.

"Don't beat him."

He breathed in, seemed to suck; the mother looked pained and happy, but the weighing machine was inexorable.

"Twenty grammes," said the mother, and burst into tears. The nurse quickly prepared a supplementary bottle.

"If you want to nurse him," said Cuvelier, "emotions are forbidden—they spoil the milk."

"Very well, doctor. Can I take a little cold water from the carafe to bathe my eyes?"

The attempts at breast-feeding lasted for two days, and during those two days nothing could have been calmer, more docile than Mlle. Alberte.

But Cuvelier thought: "Something worries me about that woman. Insolence? No. Obsession of mother love? But I, myself with my daughter. . . . If only that tubercle leaves her alone. . . . This little milk fever after weaning to-day does not look too good to me."

The next day there was the threat of a breast abscess. Cuvelier himself administered, in agreement with his colleague, that terrible vaccine which makes the thermometer move up to more than 102 deg., which makes the teeth chatter and causes delirium. He put off two calls and came back, anxious, during the height of the fever.

"For him, for him! It is he who has done this to me. Oh, I feel you—it was your little gums. Thank you, thank you, my darling."

"She is an hysteric," said the nun severely.

"Generally maternity calms them."

The fever went down. Made older by her wrinkles which had deepened and by hair grown whiter since her pregnancy, the mother lying flat in her bed was now no more than a resigned woman, who, happy to see a cradle, scarcely dared ask to look into this cradle. During the healing of the abscess Cuvelier bent over her with admiration and with pity.

("My old romanticism." And he shrugged his shoulders.)

The day came when the mother got up, put on, laughing, the clothes now too large for her. Then came the day when she could take her child out. The day before her departure for Mayenne, the doctor joined her in the street, as she was going to his house. She walked along, her profile towards him, her child in her arms, her elbows thrust forward, her lips so tightly closed they seemed white, watching out for bumps and threading her way.

"It is nice to be out?" he said to relieve her tension.

"Oh, yes, doctor. *Before* I dared not go out, but now I don't mind any more; it is even jolly good to be able to hate everybody."

Chilled, Cuvelier made her come in, gave her his last prescriptions. Mlle. Alberte took the papers from his hands with so much respect that he dared to say to her: "So you hate everybody, then?"

"Men, yes. All men are beasts. Not you, certainly. I don't count you as a man, nor the little one."

"We are women, then?"

"More so, and yet no. Women are of no account. The baby, he is apart and you a little, too, because of him."

* * *

Two years later, on Sunday, coming back from his holiday, Dr. Cuvelier passed through Mayenne in his car. He went to the old maid's former address. Mlle. Alberte had moved. The new tenant showed him quite a pretty little house.

"She is married, then?"

"Married? Oh no, not she."

He went in alone, and found the child in the orchard, asleep under a kind of mosquito net. Why the net?

He found Mlle. Alberte near four large beehives. The bees and the old maid seemed highly excited.

"A pretty house," he said, after making himself known again.

"Now I am supervisor, my salary has doubled. Since he has been there I work hard. I correct also. I have plenty of time. An unmarried not often has visitors. But come, come and look. It's a great day."

Her eyes burned in her thin face, which had become almost beautiful. Her hair had turned quite white. She drew the doctor near the hives.

"Do you see? Do you see? It is the day when the bees massacre the males. Look at that. Come, my little ones. In order to keep them, I have put traps for the males at the doors. Look! They can get in by these little shutters, but only my bees can get out again. Besides, men are so stupid. There—there are a lot in this trap here. Let us drown them in the butt under the gutter. Yes, baby is still asleep. He is lovely, isn't he? Bees are amusing, aren't they? They alone are any good."

Cuvelier, pleading the fatigue and the journey, went to sit near the child's cot. It slept a contented sleep. One thumb, stuck in the air, pushed out of a clenched fist.

"It is only you whom I would let near him," said Mlle. Alberte. "It worries me even when the maid looks after him."

"No news of the father?"

"Yes, I have been lucky. He is dead."

The doctor did not know what to say. He saw over the house and the garden, said good-bye outside the gate. He risked saying: "Doesn't it surprise you that you hate all men and love the boy so much?"

"I don't know, doctor. I have never thought about it. I think all that happened to me at the same time."

THE HOUSE ON FIRE

By LILIKA NAKOS

(Translated by Allan Ross MacDougall)

IT was noon. Madame Angeliki, after having worked in the kitchen, was now resting on the sofa in the dining-room. The sun streamed in through the glassed-in balcony. "A lovely day!" she said, and then sighed deeply.

Next door her husband was getting ready to go out. "Did you clean my uniform?" he asked her. Then he came into the room where his wife lay and began to brush himself before the mirror. He was a tall man, dark, broad-shouldered: an officer.

Madame Angeliki was thinking of other things. She said: "Andreas hasn't come in yet. I ask myself where he can possibly be. . . . Oh, George, you're soft with that child."

The father did not answer. He continued to brush himself before the mirror.

"Yes," Madame Angeliki continued, "you are too soft; I've always told you so. He needs a good whipping again. We don't even know what he does with his money. . . . You'll see. . . . It'll come to a bad end, this. . . ."

Suddenly the father turned about and banged his fist on the table. "Oh, enough of your eternal whinings," he said. "What in the name of God do you want me to do? You saw well enough what good yesterday's whipping did. Besides, you'll end by making me hate the sight of that child. One day I'll stand him up against the wall there and shoot him down; and you'll be the cause of it." He buttoned up his uniform and fiercely left the house, banging the door behind him. Madame Angeliki sighed anew and wagged her head.

Andreas had just then come in and was going upstairs. The father elbowed his son and acted as though he had not noticed him. The youth passed him with a bold air, his hands stuck in his pockets. He was about fifteen; a fine-looking lad, healthy, robust, with lively black eyes. His mouth was finely drawn, but already there was a bitter line about it. On seeing him the mother sprang at him.

"Tramp! Blackguard! Not to have come here all morning! And your money? What have you done with your money?"

Andreas looked her in the eye with a brazen look. Then he threw five drachmas on the floor at her. "Here, there's your money!" he said; "and shut up or I get out. . . ."

Madame Angeliki, beside herself, tried to catch hold of the boy and give him maybe a good slap. But Andreas stopped her hand and pushed her back. He became livid.

"Not that," he said with an exasperated and shrill voice. "You know very well that I don't want to be touched. You think maybe that I was born to be your slave. Well, you're wrong!" Then he slouched away to lean on the glassed-in balcony—the *stamaria*—that looked out on the sea.

Seated in a corner, Madame Angeliki began to cry. "Oh, you'll be the death of me," she said. Then she began her complaints again, her voice broken by sobs. "A bad boy. . . . No pity for his own mother. . . . No help to his family that feeds and clothes him. . . ."

But the young man, his brow pressed against the panes of the *stamaria*, remained impassive. He looked out over the sea. Oh, to get away, he thought, his lips tight; to leave, to go far away. His mother's complaints no longer touched him. His three sisters to marry; his ingratitude; his duties towards his family; all that left him indifferent. Looking out to the sea, he had but one idea: to leave. His mother behind him was still sobbing. He turned about and watched her for awhile. Then, exasperated, he looked for his cap and went out, banging the door.

"A bitch's life! A bitch of a life!" he muttered as he went downstairs. On the outside steps there was a pot of begonias. With a swift kick he sent it crashing into the neighbouring courtyard. Once in the street he strode quickly off. He thought: yes, that's it; bring children into the world to make them work. Have a good time and then afterwards have someone to oppress. Well, it won't be me! It won't be me that's going to get them out of the hole, destroying my lungs to get dowries for three such insignificant people as my sisters. . . . I'm going to get out . . . I've had enough—enough.

As he went along he met one of his chums, the tailor's son. "Heh, Spiros, where are you going?" Andreas asked him. He answered that he had things to do and that his father was waiting for him. "Idiot! let your father wait; you're no servant, eh?" Andreas shot at him. "C'mon with me. We'll go to the country and 'smoke'."

Spiros hesitated for a moment and then followed. When they were outside the town they fell in with two other boys playing truant from school. They were sunning themselves in the grass. One of them imitated the teacher; and then they began to retail bits of small-town gossip.

Andreas stood for a while listening to them. How stupid they are, he thought. And he immediately regretted having invited Spiros to come along. He suddenly wanted to be alone. He left the group there and stalked away. Coming to a little hillock, the boy lay down on the grass. He bethought himself that in the evening he would have to go again to the printing-shop and work. He was sleepy, his eyes were heavy and his body wracked. "They're going to do me in with this work," he said to himself, and he moaned like a little child. Then he looked off in the distance. Oh, the lovely clouds over there! And this fresh air after the

stinking night spent in that filthy cellar that serves as a printing-shop. . . . He drew the fresh air deep into his lungs and then fell asleep.

When Andreas awoke it was late. The stars were shining above his head. And to think that he would have to go again and shut himself up there where a few miserable men sweated for a crust of bread. Shut oneself up in that stinking hole when the night is so lovely as to make you want to weep! A dull anger against his parents went through him. Above all, against his mother, whom he detested. Not to hear her complaints any more. Not to hear her voice retailing his duties towards his family. Well, sir, they can all wait! He would avenge himself. Only he must work it out. Find something that would cost them dearly. Something that would strike neat. For instance, set the house on fire. Then he would go. He had set some money aside. That very evening an Italian boat, anchored since a few days in the port, was setting sail at midnight. He would go and find the sailor with whom he had already talked. Yes, he would go far away without anyone knowing. Oh, what fun to belong to no one and to have life before you!

Andreas raised his head and looked up at the starry sky. He stretched himself out with little cries of satisfaction and sniffed in the cool air like a young animal. He began to think out what his vengeance would be . . . and his mind was made up. On the top of the cliff there was a steep rock. It dropped perpendicular into a deep sea. It was from there that all those who wished to end their lives threw themselves into the sea. He would go there then, leaving a few clothes to make believe he had committed suicide. Then he would leave a letter—a sealed letter—in which he would write:

“Life disgusts me. And I prefer to die since my own mother has tried to violate me.”

And Andreas, intoxicated with a ferocious joy, went racing towards the town. He entered a little café and wrote his letter. Then he went back up and left his coat and cap, and set the letter in such a way that it could be seen at first glance. . . .

Then he fled.

THE FARM SHOW

By MARIANNE MOORE

CHOOSING a cluster of saplings not far from the show-ring, and having fastened the bridles of their horses each to a sizable trunk, they walked towards the livestock, noting the motley of exhibitors, farmhands, and nondescripts, rustic or fashionable, that loitered in an apparently bustling congestion.

Jersey heifers were being judged, shining strands like the hair of a Sieglinda that formed the lock at the end of the tail, striking the ankles of the animal at each step. The much waiting and deliberateness of the comparisons gave ample opportunity to notice the clamshell wrinkles about the eyes, line within line; the clipped-rabbit texture of the dewlaps seamed by longitudinal wrinkles, the hairs from opposing directions coming together in a ridge down the tail; the oiled hoofs and small devil-horn points on the forehead, polished to the texture of agate.

The animals continued to stand, tame but uncomprehending—in their eyes the accidental arch effect of wonder characteristic of cows. As the final entry was led in, slate-grey tinged with speckles on the shoulders, a man in a blue denim suit and farm hat remarked to an old fellow leaning on a knobbed stick: "Carrying a little more meat than the others, but I don't like the colour." The judge stood off to consider, passed his hand along the back of now this one, now that; or stooped to examine the milk-veins.

Then came some bulls, locomotive-like forms with peg legs and faces like a chopping-block. Venturing a glance in Alec's direction, the old man moved a step nearer and said: "I don't see much in classed cattle; and I don't think much of grafting. I used to grow 'cots in California—Red Royals and White Royals; Big Royals and Little Royals. Grafting's all foolishness; it don't make them any better, but you have to do it for the trade. I've had pretty good success with vegetables, though; and flowers. You interested in flowers?"

ALEC: "Some. Yes, I like flowers; I think they're very nice."

OLD FELLOW: "I've done a little scientific hybridising. From five dollars' worth of seed I sold a hundred and forty dollars' worth of squash. It takes about seven years to perfect a type. It's not hard to do; it just takes time. I got the Boston Marrow and it took me five years to eliminate the green. About the *biggest* thing I ever raised was a castor-oil plant."

NAT (narrowing his eyes into an expression of simulated curiosity): "Did the beans yield much oil?"

OLD FELLOW (coming closer): "How's that? A castor-oil plant—*Ricinis Zanzibarensis*. The leaf measured fifty-two inches across. I made

an oval flower-bed and I had that in the middle; then around that I had cannas; gladi-ole-as next, and next them red and white foliage-plants; and round the outside, geraniums—though I don't like the smell of them."

ALEC: "I know more about straw than I do about flowers—though not any too much about that either. They've improved the mechanical strength but they don't seem to be doing much for the chemical strength."

OLD MAN (reverentially attentive): "Yes, a sappy straw can't hold up a heavy head of grain. Six-foot straw is going to lie down if it gets wet."

Alec withdrew, impinging on Nat. "Suppose we have a look at the swine." There were Berkshires, Durocs, and Mule-foots, housed under roofed pens; also a much-heralded assortment of hybrids derived from four breeds—Poland China, Duroc Jersey, Chester White, and Yorkshire—said to come in larger litters, to wean earlier, grow faster, and cost less to feed than the pure-breds.

NAT: "Ever seen the old Apricot before?"

ALEC: "I may have. He's all right," (leaning down and silking an ear of one of the Mule-foots). "You never felt a sweeter thing."

NAT: "Didn't you see that sign as we came in? 'Visitors must not touch the animals.'"

ALEC: "Well, these are neighbours; they belong just down the road from us. I wouldn't want to hurt their feelings by acting as if they were pigs."

NAT: "They have certain pig marks about them."

ALEC: "Silk ears, I suppose you mean."

NAT: "What's the difference between pigs, hogs, and swine?"

ALEC: "Hogs are pork on the hoof; pigs are young hogs; and all are swine."

NAT: "True. Of course."

In a building, with specimen apples and varieties of corn, were samples of hay and alfalfa below fine-print bulletins on the wall, concerning grasses, harvesting, and the control of disease. Noticing a man, who was addressing six or seven people, catch up a handful of hay from a bin, Alec said: "He's talking about sun-drying and vitamins; see if he isn't," and they heard, handsomely enunciated as they came nearer, "This artificially dried alfalfa on a ten-pound per day ration increases milk production by two-thirds of a quart to one quart of milk per cow each day. To the value of this increase of milk should be added the saving in the cost of the grain ration, which may be cut down due to the high protein content of the alfalfa." Adjacent was the drier itself and a paddle-wheel-like arrangement for letting in the chopped hay in regular amounts, and a blower which fanned the dried hay into storage.

An observer taking a pinch of hay from the bin under discussion remarked: "Smells like tobacco." Manufacturers' representatives were

expatiating on the advantage of storing feed in this or that type of silo. There were specimen grains under glass, sacks of fertiliser in rows, salesmen presenting poultry-feed and cracked oyster-shell. Nearby, two tree-surgeons, advocates of contrasting methods, stood conversing between their respective exhibits. Making a partial survey of the machinery, but disliking to leave without so much as a sight of the horses, Alec and his guest crowded through a compartment choked with handlers and owners who stood admiring "the matchless conformation at the ground" of a champion Percheron. The bobbins stood up stiffly along the ridge of the neck; and the bun of tail was tied with blue yarn, projecting whiskers of clipped wheat-straw having been bound into the whole. With casual listeners worming past him a man of resourceful eye—custodian of the great Percheron—was insisting: "If the horse is to go barefoot, it should have plenty of horn; but if it's going to work on hard-surfaced roads. . . ." Alec said to Nat: "Do you want to stay and hear about shoes and hoof-oils?"

NAT: "No. I guess Zenophon and the Army Manual will suffice for my needs."

On returning to the copse to get their mounts it seemed that all was as it should be, except that the horses, in moving to avoid the sun, had wound the reins round the tree-trunks. A sense of sylvan remoteness was all-pervasive—in the dropping of an acorn, the scurry of a chipmunk over a log, the faint aroma of drying leaves, and with instinctively prolonged deliberateness they were approaching the exit when a touring-car that was being eased gently over the inequalities of the dusty road caused them to back out of the way. A man in a Panama hat and light homespun suit was driving the car and with him was a girl, erectly wiry, also in light clothes and wide white hat. Alec, suddenly under constraint, with an unnaturalness which even the awkwardness of his horse did not cover, smiled, waiting. Then, his manner changing, he called out pleasantly: "Hello, Camelford! Henrietta! Come ahead, we're big-hearted. You first." Camelford, acknowledging the pleasantry with a nod towards the stock-pens, said: "Anything here worth bothering about?" Alec twisted round and rested his palm on the horse's back, so he faced Camelford directly. "A lot; some merino rams and an immense porker with curling tusks. You don't want to miss him, even if you don't see anything else."

CAMELFORD: "The world is full of them." And starting the car, he moved on.

NAT: "Funny, I thought for a minute that was Eloise with him."

ALEC (recessively): "So did I."

Nat, suddenly curious, inspected Alec, willing to penetrate his recovered aplomb. Resistance to propinquity is love's apologia, and the more unimplicated the behaviour, the blinder the involvement. But

Alec, pricked to naturalness and the sense that hospitality had been dormant, said: "You know Henrietta Camelford, don't you? Didn't you meet her at Emily's the other day?"

NAT: "Yes, and before that; about fifteen times. No matter how often I see her, she never knows me, and I have to be introduced over again; but I don't mind keeping on."

ALEC: "Scared of you, probably."

NAT: "I wonder? . . . You know, the authentic queen bee is industriously buzzed about—in my experience——"

ALEC (startled and turning on Nat): "What queen bee?" With glances of mutual vigilance but with unimplicated goodwill, they looked ahead again, and the horses proceeded in unison.

DEATH OF DAN BOYLE

By MICHAEL SAYERS

WHO did you say? Dan Boyle, did you say? Did you mention Dan Boyle? There was a man for you! There was a grand man! Dan Boyle, the hearty Dan. A powerful man! Look, sure he had the width of a yoke across his shoulders, so he had. Dan was built like a mountain, the swell of his chest like the side of a hill! Am I exaggerating? Did you ever see him yourself, by any chance? The powerfulest man that ever walked—Dan Boyle!

Did I know him? Did I know Dan? Sure we worked on the same land, Dan and me, since the time we'd been scraggy boys. Phelan Clancy's land, old Phelan Clancy who's dead since. Dan's dead, too, rest him: shot dead. Sure I felt his great strength myself, dead weight on my arms, when we carried him back up the hill to his home. . . .

Wait and I'll tell you. I'll tell you it all. Every syllable gospel too, whatever some blackguards may say! Dan was my friend. Make no mistake about that. I'd have laid down my life for him, for big Dan Boyle, the grandest, genuinst, bravest, decentest, strongest man I ever knew or I'm ever likely to know! He picked me up once, Dan did, in his two hands—up like that—the way you or I might pick up a puppydog. Aye. I saw him once bend a whole iron gate that'd got loose—bend it across his chest, easy as rubber!

Some hereabouts may tell you he didn't like me. That he threatened to murder me if I made free with his wife. Don't heed them and their soul-destroying lies! Dan was my friend, the best and grandest pal a man could have. Often when he'd be having to do some job for old Phelan and I'd be free, Dan'd say to me: "Slip down and keep the wife company for me, will you?" You see, she was a young one, Dan's wife, from Cork City, a stranger in our parts. She didn't easily accustom herself to us at first. She'd be lonely when Dan would be out, and the bitterness was they'd no children and none seemed coming. Aye. For all his strength, they'd no little ones in the house. And it wasn't her fault, let me tell you. She was the finest woman I ever set eyes on in those days (and something to see at her best now, too), big and fat, with hair on her head thick as the grass in a summer meadow, and skin white as snow might've fallen upon snow. And I'd keep her company while Dan'd be out.

And when the Trouble started and Dan was drilling, and when Dan was fighting for the liberation of Ireland, wasn't it natural for me, being young and close of age, to go on keeping the wife company and putting the black thoughts from her brain?

Months on end Dan'd be away, and he'd come home only in a hurry

to be off again. Always pleased as a piper to see me. Always saying: "Keep the wife company in my absence, won't you? Don't let her fret." Dan needn't have feared. Naturally I'd help her in every way. She was Dan's wife, wasn't she? That was enough for me.

The way things happen! One tick it's blue sky and gold light everywhere and next the dark storm's over all!

Dan'd been away for months. News came from time to time. Nothing but good news. Next we knew there was a reward put out for the taking of him dead or alive. A hundred pound reward. We heard that the British'd trapped him in a pub, and he'd fought his way through the lot of them, killing an officer, and got away somehow over the roofs. Dan could do things like that. And here they were, putting a hundred pound on his capture.

His wife let herself go in her grief entirely. "It's the finish of him," she kept saying. "It's the dead end of Dan, surely. They'll take him and kill him dead!"

But one grey morning, I had been in comforting the wife, and I was just walking out of the cottage, when who should I see clambering up the road like a madman but Dan! He came up panting and caught hold of me, and said: "They're after me, now!" He was in a terrible cut, the clothes ripped half off him, his boots split open, and a great dry red gash on his cheek.

"Is it the Tans?" said I.

"They're after me this minute!" said Dan, his eyes burning out of his face. "A whole bloody lorryload of them! Man, I'm spent. I've been on the run for weeks, no sleep, nothing to eat. They're set on having revenge on me!"

"You can't stay here," I told him. "They're sure to seek for you in your own home."

Dan was distracted and he didn't know what he was saying. He said: "Maybe *you'd* like to be keeping me out of it?"

I asked him straight: "What's behind your words, Dan?"

He said: "The boys have been telling me to look out and mind behind my back. There's tricks going backward and forward. Man, look," he burst out with one of his awful roars, "if it's what's in my mind, Tans or no Tans, there'll be two facing Hell this morn!"

"Dan," said I. "Dan, you're not mistrusting me, are you?"

And then and there on the road outside his home, I tell you, Dan Boyle solemnly took me by the hand and he said: "Whatever you say I believe because you're my friend."

At that precise moment there was the chugg-chugging of a motor. "Do you hear that? It's the lorry!" said Dan, and he ducked below the wall and ran into the porch and inside the cottage before I could raise a word.

The lorry came wheeling into sight up the road, going slow on the

climb, packed like a haywain with Black and Tans. I could see their rifles catching the light and flashing.

They were coming up slowly, heaving up, and every turn of that damned lorry's wheels made my heart go up and down with them as though I was going to be sick.

The Tans saw me, and I couldn't run away or do anything for fear they might shoot.

There was myself standing there like a statue in stone, and Dan inside in the cottage, and the lorry rumbling nearer and nearer, and all the grey morning over us all.

Then I saw Dan in the porch again, as though he'd gone mad. What had passed in the cottage I don't know, and I won't ever know. But there was Dan outside again, in full sight of the Tans!

He didn't even give them a look. He ran to the wall and jumped up and over it and into the field that sloped away down to some trees far below. I could see him scuttling there in the field, ducking along by the hedge, running like mad.

The lorry was right up to me now. One of the Tans saw Dan, and pointed, and shouted. They'd a clear view from the lorry of the whole stretch of the field. So had I. By God, you could see Dan running there with his head bent forward, a queer small object of a man, dodging in close to the hedge, with a little white patch in the seat of his pants showing him up like a runaway rabbit.

The lorry'd stopped. The Tan who'd pointed lifted his rifle, cool and steady as ice, and took aim. There was a loud crack. I saw Dan fling up his arms like a scarecrow and he gave a sort of twisty leap in the air, and fell on his back, out of our sight.

The Tans swarmed out of the lorry. Some of them went into the cottage, and a few made me lead them down to where Dan would be.

We found him lying on his back below the hedge, his two hands above his head on either side, clutching at nothing, and his great legs sprawling. To watch him you'd have thought he was nailed to the ground by the shot in his back. Blood was falling out of his mouth.

He saw us standing over him. He saw the Tans at least, for I heard him say, half-moaning: "Give us one more, for the pity of Christ. . . ."

The captain of the Tans, a young man, slipped his gun from its holster and shot Dan dead.

And that was how Dan Boyle died.

Afterwards the Tans went away. They left me alone, God knows why. But I wasn't going to ask them to shoot a bullet into me, was I? I did what I could to save Dan. A man can't do more.

And now just because I happen to live in his old cottage and have a couple of kids by Dan's widow, some'll be whispering all the time that I was a traitor, that I was the one who informed on Dan Boyle!

Maybe I didn't fight much in the Trouble. Maybe I oughtn't to have taken Dan's widow. I've had my sorrow for it.

But don't heed them and their devil-made lies! Dan Boyle took me by the hand and he said (these are his very words): "Whatever you say I believe because you're my friend." Would Dan've said that to an informer?

There, now! There it is! As soon as I start telling the story they make a hard face at me! Blast their souls! Blinking at me as though I fed them on lies!

Say I'm a liar! Go on, I dare you to! I'll fight any man in this town or out of it who says I'm a liar!

Dan Boyle was my friend. Look, I'd sooner have cut out my tongue and plucked out my eyes and torn off my ears and let them hack off my hands, than informed on Dan Boyle!

A PROSPECT OF THE SEA

By DYLAN THOMAS

IT was high summer, and the boy was lying in the corn. He was happy because he had no work to do and the weather was hot. He heard the corn sway from side to side above him, and the noise of the birds who whistled from the branches of the trees that hid the house. Lying flat on his back, he stared up into the unbrokenly blue sky falling over the edge of the corn. The wind, after the warm rain before noon, smelt of rabbits and cattle. He stretched himself like a cat, and put his arms behind his head. Now he was riding on the sea, swimming through the golden corn waves, gliding along the heavens like a bird; in seven-league boots he was springing over the fields; he was building a nest in the sixth of the seven trees that waved their hands from a bright, green hill. Now he was a boy with touseled hair, rising lazily to his feet, wandering out of the corn to the strip of river by the hillside. He put his fingers in the water, making a mock sea-wave to roll the stones over and shake the weeds; his fingers stood up like ten tower pillars in the magnifying water, and a fish with a wise head and a lashing tail swam in and out of the tower gates. He made up a story as the fish swam through the gates into the pebbles and the moving bed. There was a drowned princess from a Christmas book, with her shoulders broken and her two red pigtails stretched like the strings of a fiddle over her broken throat; she was caught in a fisherman's net, and the fish plucked her hair, and the fishermen were frightened by the tunes. He forgot how the story ended, if ever there were an end to a story that had no beginning. Did the princess live again, rising like a mermaid from the net, or did a prince from another story tauten the tails of her hair and bend her shoulder-bone into a harp and pluck the dead, black tunes for ever in the courts of the royal country? The boy sent a stone skidding over the green water. He saw a rabbit scuttle, and threw a stone at its tail. A fish leaped at the gnats, and a lark darted out of the green earth.

This was the best summer since the first seasons of the world. He did not believe in God, but God had made this summer full of blue winds and heat and pigeons in the house wood. There were no chimneys on the hills with no name in the distance, only the trees which stood like women and men enjoying the sun; there were no cranes or coal-tips, only the nameless distance and the hill with seven trees. He could think of no words to say how wonderful the summer was, or the noise of the wood-pigeons, or the lazy corn blowing in the half-wind from the sea at the river's end. There were no words for the sky and the sun and the summer country: the birds were nice, and the corn was nice.

He crossed the nice field and climbed the hill. Under the innocent

green of the trees, as black birds flew out towards the sun, the story of the princess died. That afternoon there was no drowning sea to pull her pigtailed; the sea had flowed and vanished, leaving a hill, a cornfield, and a hidden house; tall as the first short tree, she clambered down from the seventh, and stood in front of him in a torn cotton frock. Her bare brown legs were scratched all over, there were berry stains round her mouth, her nails were black and broken, and her toes poked through her rubber shoes. She stood on a hill no bigger than a house, but the field below and the shining strip of river were as little as though the hill were a mountain rising over a single blade and a drop of water; the trees round the farmhouse were firesticks; and the Jarvis peaks, and Cader peak beyond it to the edge of England, were molehills and stones' shadows in the still, single yard of the distance. From the first shade, the boy stared down at the river disappearing, the corn blowing back into the soil, the hundred house trees dwindling to a stalk, and the four corners of the yellow field meeting in a square that he could cover with his hand. He saw the many-coloured county shrink like a coat in the wash. Then a new wind sprang from the pennyworth of water at the river-drop's end, blowing the hill field to its full size, and the corn stood up as before, and the one stalk that hid the house was split into a hundred trees. It happened in half a second.

Black birds again flew out from the topmost boughs in a cloud like a cone; there was no end to the black, triangular flight of birds towards the sun; from hill to sun the winged bridge mounted silently; and then again a wind blew up, and this time from the vast and proper sea, and snapped the bridge's back. Like partridges the common birds fell down in a shower.

All of it happened in half a second. The girl in the torn cotton frock sat down on the grass and crossed her legs; a real wind from nowhere lifted her frock, and up to her waist she was brown as an acorn. The boy, still standing timidly in the first shade, saw the broken, holiday princess die for the second time, and a country girl take her place on the live hill. Who had been frightened of a few birds flying out of the trees, and a sudden daze of the sun that made river and field and distance look so little under the hill? Who had told him the girl was as tall as a tree? She was no taller or stranger than the flowery girls on Sundays who picnicked in Whippet valley.

What were you doing up the tree? he asked her, ashamed of his silence in front of her smiling, and suddenly shy as she moved so that the grass beneath her rose bent and green between her brown legs. Were you after nests? he said, and sat down beside her. But on the bent grass in the seventh shade, his first terror of her sprang up again like a sun returning from the sea that sank it, and burned his eyes to the skull and raised his hair. The stain on her lips was blood, not berries;

and her nails were not broken but sharpened sideways, ten black scissor-blades ready to snip off his tongue. If he cried aloud to his uncle in the hidden house, she would make new animals, beckon Carmarthen tigers out of the mile-away wood to jump around him and bite his hands; she would make new, noisy birds in the air to whistle and chatter away his cries. He sat very still by her left side, and heard the heart in her breast drown every summer sound; every leaf of the tree that shaded them grew to man-size then, the ribs of the bark were channels and rivers wide as a great ship; and the moss on the tree, and the sharp grass ring round the base, were all the velvet covering of a green county's meadows blown hedge to hedge. Now on the world-sized hill, with the trees like heavens holding up the weathers, in the magnified summer weather she leaned towards him so that he could not see the cornfield nor his uncle's house for her thick, red hair; and sky and far ridge were points of light in the pupils of her eyes. This is death, said the boy to himself, consumption and whooping-cough and the stones inside you and the death from playing with yourself and the way your face stays if you make too many faces in the looking-glass. Her mouth was an inch from his. Her long forefingers touched his eyelids. This is a story, he said to himself, about a boy on a holiday kissed by a broom-rider; she flew from a tree on to a hill that changes its size like a frog that loses its temper; she stroked his eyes and put her chest against him; and when she had loved him until he died she carried him off inside her to a den in a wood. But the story, like all stories, was killed as she kissed him; now he was a boy in a girl's arms, and the hill stood above a true river, and the peaks and their trees towards England were as Jarvis had known them when he walked there with his lovers and horses for half a century, a century ago.

Who had been frightened of a wind out of the light swelling the small country? The piece of a wind in the sun was like the wind in an empty house; it made the corners mountains, and crowded the attics with shadows which broke through the roof; through the country corridors it raced in a hundred voices, each voice larger than the last, until the last voice tumbled down and the house was full of whispers. Where do you come from? she whispered in his ear. She took her arms away but still sat close, one knee between his legs, one hand on his hands. Who had been frightened of a sunburned girl no taller or stranger than the pale girls at home who had babies before they were married? I come from Amman valley, said the boy. I have a sister in Egypt, she said, who lives in a pyramid. She pressed down her knee, and laughed when he drew in his breath. You mustn't, he said. She mimicked his Mustn't, you mustn't, and drew him closer. They're calling me in for tea, he said. She lifted her frock to her waist. If she loves me until I die, said the boy to himself under the seventh tree on the hill that was never the same for three minutes, she will carry me away inside her, run with me

A PROSPECT OF THE SEA

ling inside to a den in a wood, to a hole in a tree where my uncle never find me. This is the story of a boy being stolen. She has a knife in my belly and turned my stomach round.

he whispered in his ear: I'll have a baby on every hill; what's your
ie, Amman? The afternoon was dying; lazily, namelessly drifting
tward through the insects in the shade; over hill and tree and river
corn and grass to the evening shaping in the sea; blowing away;
ig blown from Wales in a wind, in the slow, blue grains, like a wind
of dreams and medicines; down the tide of the sun on to the grey
chanting shore where the birds from Noah's ark glide by with
hes in their mouths, and to-morrow and to-morrow tower over the
sked sand-castles.

o she stroked her clothes into place and patted back her hair as the
began to die; she rolled over on to her left side, careless of the low
and the darkening miles. The boy awoke cautiously into a more
ous dream, a summer vision broader than the one black cloud poised
he unbroken centre on a tower shaft of light; he came out of love
ough a wind full of turning knives and a cave full of flesh-white
ls on to a new summit, standing like a stone that faces the stars
wing and stands no ceremony from the sea wind, a hard boy angry on
ound in the middle of a country evening; he put out his chest and
l hard words to the world. Out of love he came marching, head on
h, through a cave between two doors to a vantage hall room with an
a view over the earth. He walked to the last rail before pitch space;
ugh the earth bowled round quickly, he saw every plough crease and
st's print, man track and water drop, comb, crest, and plume mark,
it and death groove and signature and time-cast shade, from ice field
ce field, sea rims to sea centres, all over the apple-shaped ball under
metal rails beyond the living doors. He saw through the black thumb-
nt of a man's city to the fossil thumb of a once-lively man of meadows;
ough the grass and clover fossil of the country print to the whole hand
a forgotten city drowned under Europe; through the handprint to the
n of an empire broken like Venus; through the arm to the breast,
m history to the thigh, through the thigh in the dark to the first and
st print between the dark and the green Eden; and the garden was
drowned, to this next minute and for ever, under Asia in the earth
it rolled on to its music in the beginning evening. When God was
eping, he had climbed a ladder, and the room three jumps above the
al rung was roofed and floored with the live pages of the book of days;
e pages were gardens, the built words were trees, and Eden grew above
n into Eden, and Eden grew down to Eden through the lower earth,
endless corridor of boughs and birds and leaves. He stood on a slope
wider than the loving room of the world, and the two poles kissed
hind his shoulders; the boy stumbled forward like Atlas, loped over
e iron view through the cave of knives and the capsized overgrowths

of time to the hill in the field that had been a short mark under the platform in the clouds over the multiplying gardens.

Wake up, she said into his ear; the iron characters were broken in her smile, and Eden shrank into the seventh shade. She told him to look in her eyes. He had thought that her eyes were brown or green, but they were sea-blue with black lashes, and her thick hair was black. She rumbled his hair, and put his hand deep in her breast so that he knew the nipple of her heart was red. He looked in her eyes, but they made a round glass of the sun, and as he moved sharply away he saw through the transparent trees; she could make a long crystal of each tree, and turn the house wood into gauze. She told him her name, but he had forgotten it as she spoke; she told him her age, and it was a new number. Look in my eyes, she said. It was only an hour to the proper night, the stars were coming out and the moon was ready. She took his hand and led him racing between trees over the ridge of the dewy hill, over the flowering nettles and the shut grass-flowers, over the silence into sunlight and the noise of a sea breaking on sand and stone.

The hill in a screen of trees: between the incountry fields and the incoming sea, night on the wood and the stained beach yellow in the sun, the vanishing corn through the ten dry miles of farmland and the golden wastes where the split sand lapped over rocks, it stood between time over a secret root. The hill in two searchlights: the back moon shone on seven trees, and the sun of a strange day moved above water in the spluttering foreground. The hill between an owl and a seagull: the boy heard two birds' voices as brown wings climbed through the branches and the white wings before him fluttered on the sea waves. 'Tu wit tu woo, do not adventure any more. Now the gulls that swam in the sky told him to race on along the warm sand until the water hugged him to its waves and the spindrift tore around him like a wind and a chain. The girl had her hand in his, and she rubbed her cheek on his shoulder. He was glad of her near him, for the princess was broken, and the monstrous girl was turned into a tree, and the frightening girl who threw the country into a daze of sizes, and drove him out of love into the cloudy house, was left alone in the moon's circle and the seven shades behind the screen.

It was hot that morning in the unexpected sunshine. A girl dressed in cotton put her mouth to his ear. I'll run you to the sea, she said, and her breasts jumped up and down as she raced in front of him, with her hair flying wild, to the edge of the sea that was not made of water and the small, thundering pebbles that broke in a million pieces as the dry sea moved in. Along the bright wrack-line, from the horizon where the vast birds sailed like boats, from the four compass corners, bellying up through the weed-beds, melting from orient and tropic, surging through the ice hills and the whale grounds, through sunset and sunrise corridors, the salt gardens and the herring fields, whirlpool and rock pool, out of the

trickle in the mountain, down the waterfalls, a white-faced sea of people, the terrible mortal number of the waves, all the centuries' sea drenched in the hail before Christ, who suffered to-morrow's storm wind, came in with the whole world's voices on the endless beach. Come back, come back, the boy cried to the girl. She ran on unheeding over the sand and was lost among the sea. Now her face was a white drop of water in the horizontal rainfall, and her limbs were white as snow and lost in the white, walking tide. Now the heart in her breast was a small red bell that rang in a wave, her colourless hair fringed the spray, and her voice lapped over the flesh-and-bone water. He cried again, but she had mingled with the people moving in and out. Their tides were drawn by a grave moon that never lost an arc. Their long, sea gestures were deliberate, the flat hands beckoning, the heads uplifted, the eyes in the mask faces set in one direction. Oh where was she now in the sea? Among the white, walking, and the coral-eyed. Come back, come back. Darling, run out of the sea. Among the processional waves. The bell in her breast was ringing over the sand. He ran to the yellow foot of the dunes, calling over his shoulder. Run out of the sea. In the once-green water where the fishes swam, where the gulls rested, where the luminous stones were rubbed and rocked on the scales of the green bed, when ships puffed over the tradeways, and the mad, nameless animals came down to drink the salt. Among the measuring people. Oh where was she now? The sea was lost behind the dunes. He stumbled on over sand and sandflowers like a blind boy in the sun. The sun dodged round his shoulders.

There was a story once upon a time whispered in the water voice; it blew out the echo from the trees behind the beach in the golden hollows, scraped on the wood until the musical birds and beasts came jumping into sunshine. A raven flew by him, out of a window in the Flood to the blind, wind tower shaking in to-morrow's anger like a scarecrow made out of weathers.

Once upon a time, said the water voice.

Do not adventure any more, said the echo.

She is ringing a bell for you in the sea.

I am the owl and the echo: you shall never go back.

On a hill to the horizon stood an old man building a boat, and the light that slanted from the sea cast the holy mountain of a shadow over the three-storied decks and the Eastern timber. And through the sky, out of the beds and gardens, down the white precipice built of feathers, the loud combs and mounds, from the caves in the hill, the cloudy shapes of birds and beasts and insects drifted into the hewn door. A dove with a green petal followed in the raven's flight. Cool rain began to fall.

THE BAPTISM

By ELIZABETH BISHOP

IT was November. They bent in the twilight like sea-plants, around their little dark centre-table hung with a cloth like a seaweed-covered rock. It seemed as if a draught might sway them all, perceptibly. Lucy, the youngest, who still did things for her sisters, rose to get the shawls and light the lamp. She sighed. How would they get through the winter?

"We have our friends!"

Yes, that was true and a consolation. They had several friends. They had old Mrs. Peppard and young Mrs. Gillespie and old Mrs. Captain Green and little Mrs. Kent. One of them was bound to drop in almost every afternoon.

When the weather was fine they themselves could make a call, although they preferred to stay at home. They were more in command of conversation when they sat close together around their own table. Antiphonally, they spoke to their friends of the snowstorm, of health, of church activities. They had the church, of course.

When the snow grew too deep—it grew all winter, as the grain grew all summer, and finally wilted away unharvested in April—old Mr. Jonson, who had the post-office now, would bring the newspaper on his way home.

They would manage, but winter was longer every year. Lucy thought of carrying wood in from the wood-shed and scratching her forearms on the bark. Emma thought of hanging out the washing which was frozen before you got it on to the line. The sheets particularly—it was like fighting with monster icy seagulls. Flora thought only of the difficulties of getting up and dressing at six o'clock every morning.

They would keep two stoves going: the kitchen range and an airtight in the sitting-room. The circulatory system of their small house was this: in the ceiling over the kitchen stove there was an opening set with a metal grill. It yielded up some heat to the room where Lucy and Emma slept. The pipe from the sitting-room stove went up through Flora's room, but it wasn't so warm, of course.

They baked bread once a week. In the other bedroom there were ropes and ropes of dried apples. They ate apple-sauce and apple-pie and apple-dumpling, and a kind of cake paved with slices of apple. At every meal they drank a great deal of tea and ate many slices of bread. Sometimes they bought half a pound of store cheese, sometimes a piece of pork.

Emma knitted shawls, wash-cloths, bed-socks, an affectionate spider-web around Flora and Lucy. Flora did fancy work and made enough

Christmas presents for them to give all around: to each other and to friends. Lucy was of no use at all with her fingers. She was supposed to read aloud while the others worked.

They had gone through a lot of old travel books that had belonged to their father. One was called *Wonders of the World*; one was a book about Palestine and Jerusalem. Although they could all sit calmly while Lucy read about the tree that gave milk like a cow, the Eskimos who lived in the dark, the automaton chess-player, etc., Lucy grew excited over accounts of the Sea of Galilee, and the engraving of the Garden of Gethsemane as it looks to-day brought tears to her eyes. She exclaimed "Oh dear!" over pictures of "An Olive Grove," with Arabs squatting about in it; and "Heavens!" at the real, rock-vaulted Stable, the engraved rocks like big black thumb-prints.

They had also read: (1) *David Copperfield*, twice; (2) *The Deer-Slayer*; (3) *Samantha at the World's Fair*; (4) *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*.

Also two or three books from the Sunday School library which none of them liked. Because of the source, however, they listened as politely as to the minister's sermons. Lucy's voice even took on a little of his intonation, so that it seemed to take for ever to get through them.

They were Presbyterians. The village was divided into two camps, armed with Bibles: Baptists and Presbyterians. The sisters had friends on both sides.

Prayer-meeting was Friday night. There was Sunday School and Church on Sunday, and Ladies' Aid every other week at different friends' houses. Emma taught the smallest children in Sunday School. Lucy and Flora preferred not to teach but to attend the class for adults held by the minister himself.

Now each was arranging the shawl over her shoulders, and just as Lucy lit the lamp old Mrs. Peppard came to call. She opened the back door without knocking, and said, "Anybody home?" This was the thing to do. She wore a very old mud-brown coat with large black frogs down the front and a black, cloth-covered hat with a velvet flower on it.

Her news was that her sister's baby had died the day before, although they had done everything. She and Emma, Flora and Lucy discussed infant damnation at some length.

Then they discussed the care of begonias, and Mrs. Peppard took home a slip of theirs. Flora had always had great luck with house-plants.

Lucy grew quite agitated after Mrs. Peppard had gone, and could not eat her bread and butter, only drank three cups of tea.

Of course, as Emma had expected because of the tea, Lucy couldn't sleep that night. Once she nudged Emma and woke her.

"Emma, I'm thinking of that poor child."

"Stop thinking. Go to sleep."

"Don't you think we ought to pray for it?"

It was the middle of the night or she couldn't have said that. Emma pretended to be asleep. In fact, she was asleep, but not so much that she couldn't feel Lucy getting out of bed. The next day she mentioned this to Flora, who only said "Tsch—Tsch." Later on they both referred to this as the "beginning," and Emma was sorry she'd gone back to sleep.

In prayer-meeting one Friday the minister called for new members, and asked some of those who had joined the church lately to speak. Art Tinkham stood up. He talked of God's goodness to him for a long time, and said that now he felt happy all the time. He had felt so happy when he was doing his fall ploughing that he had kept singing, and at the end of every furrow he'd said a Bible verse.

After a while the minister called on Lucy to give a prayer. She did it, quite a long one, but at last her voice began to tremble. She could scarcely say the Amen, and sat down very quickly. Afterwards her sisters said it had been a very pretty prayer, but she couldn't remember a word of it.

Emma and Lucy liked the dreamy hymns best, with vague references in them to gardens, glassy seas, high hills, etc. Flora liked militant hymns; almost her favourite was "A Mighty Fortress."

Lucy's was: "Sometimes a light surprises the Christian while he sings." Emma's: "There is a green hill far away without a city wall."

Lucy was not yet a church member. Emma and Flora were, but Lucy had been too young to join when they had. She sometimes asked her sisters if she were good enough.

"You are too good for us, Lucy."

"That's not what I mean," Lucy said.

At night she felt that Emma's prayers were over all too quickly. Her own sometimes lasted almost an hour, and even then did not seem quite long enough. She felt very guilty about something. She worried about this so much that one day she almost convinced Flora that she must have been guilty of the gravest misdemeanour as a young girl. But it was not so.

It got to be Christmas-time. The snow was up to the window-sills, practically over, as if they inhabited a sinking ship. Lucy's feeling of guilt grew heavier and heavier. She talked constantly about whether she should join the church or not.

At Christmas an elderly missionary, Miss Gillespie, young Mr. Gillespie's aunt, came home from India on furlough. The Ladies' Aid had special meetings for her. At them this tall, dark-brown, moustached woman of sixty-four talked, almost shouted, for hours about her life work. Photographs were handed around. They represented gentle-faced boys and young men, dressed in pure white loin-cloths and earrings. Next, the same boys and young men were shown, in soiled striped trousers and shirts worn with the tails outside. There were

a few photographs of women, blurred as they raised a hand to hide their faces, or backed away from the camera's Christian eye.

Emma and Flora disliked Miss Gillespie. Flora even said she was "bossy." But Lucy liked her very much and went to see her several times. Then for three weeks she talked about nothing but going as a missionary. She went through all the travel books again.

Flora and Emma did not really think she would ever go, but the thought of living without her sometimes horrified one or the other of them. At the end of the third week she stopped speaking of it and, in fact, became very untalkative.

Lucy was growing thinner. The skin of her forehead seemed stretched too tightly, and although she had never had a temper in her life, Flora and Emma could see that it was sometimes an effort for her not to speak crossly to them.

She moved very slowly. At supper she would eat half a slice of bread and put the other half back in the bread dish.

Flora, who was bolder to say things than Emma, said: "She makes me feel that I'm not as good as she is."

Once when Lucy went out to get wood from the woodshed she didn't come back for fifteen minutes. Emma, suddenly realising how long it had been, ran outside. Lucy, with no coat or shawl, stood holding on to the side of the house. She was staring at the blinding dazzle the sun made on the ice-glaze over the next field. She seemed to be humming a little, and the glaring strip made her half shut her eyes. Emma had to take hold of her hand before she would pay any attention. Speaking wasn't enough.

It was the night of the day after this that the strange things began to happen.

Lucy kept a diary. It was written in pencil in a book that said "Jumbo Scribbler" in red letters on a tan cover. It was really a record of spiritual progress.

"*January 3rd.* This morning was clear again so Flora did some of the wash and we hung it in the garden, although it was hard to with the wind. For dinner we had a nice stew with the rest of the lamb and the carrots Mr. Jonson brought in. I say a nice stew, but I could not touch a bite. The Lord seems very far away. I kept asking the girls about my joining but they did not help me at all."

Here Lucy copied out three Bible verses. Sometimes for several days the diary was made up of nothing but such quotations.

"*January 16th.* It was eighteen below zero last night. We had to get father's old buffalo robe from the spare-room. I didn't like the smell, but Emma didn't mind it. When the lamp was out I prayed for a long time, and a little while after I got into bed I felt that face moving towards me again. I can't make it out, but it is very large and close to mine. It seemed to be moving its lips. Is it reproachful?"

Four days after this Lucy began crying in the afternoon and cried almost all evening. Emma finally cried a little, too. Flora shook her by the shoulder, but left Lucy alone.

Emma wished that she and Flora slept together instead of she and Lucy, so that they could talk about Lucy together privately.

Flora said: "What has she ever done wrong, Emma? Why should she weep about her soul?"

Emma said: "She's always been as good as gold."

"*January 20th.* At last, at last, I know my own mind," she began, "or rather I have given it up completely. Now I am going to join the church as soon as I can. But I am going to join the *Baptist* church, and I must not tell Flora and Emma beforehand. I cannot eat, I am so happy. Last night at four o'clock a terrible wind began to blow. I thought all the trees were breaking, I could hear the branches crashing against the house. I thought the chimney would come down. The house shook, and I thought about the House founded on the Rock. I was terribly frightened. Emma did not wake up. It went on for hours in the dark and I prayed that we would all be safely delivered. Then there was a lull. It was very black and my heart pounded so I thought I was dying. I couldn't think of a prayer. Then suddenly a low voice began to talk right over the head of the bed. I couldn't make out the words, they weren't exactly words I knew, but I seemed to understand them. What a load dropped from my mind! Then I was so happy I woke Emma and said: 'Emma, Emma, Christ is here. He was here just now, in this room. Get up and pray with me.' Emma got out of bed and knelt, then she said the floor was cold and wanted to pull the rug over under our knees. I said: 'No, Emma. Why do we need rugs when we have all Christ's love to warm our hearts?' She did not demur after that, and I prayed a long time, for Flora, too. When we got back in bed I told Emma about the voice I had heard."

The next day Lucy called on the Baptist minister and told him she had decided to join his church. He was very severe, older than the Presbyterian minister, and Lucy felt at once that he was a much better man.

But a problem came up that she had not considered. She now believed ardently in the use of total immersion as practised by the Baptists, according to their conception of the methods of John the Baptist. She could not join without that, and the river, of course, was frozen over. She would have to wait until the ice went out.

She could scarcely bear it. In her eagerness to be baptised and her disappointment she forgot she had intended not to tell her sisters of her change of faith. They did not seem to mind so much, but when she asked them, they would not consider changing with her.

She was so over-excited they made her go to bed at five o'clock. Emma wrapped up a hot stove-lid to put at her feet.

"*January 25th.* I felt very badly last night and cried a great deal. I thought how mother always used to give me the best of everything because I was the smallest, and I took it not thinking of my sisters. Emma said 'For mercy's sake, Lucy, stop crying.' I explained to her, and she became much softened. She got up and lit the lamp. The lamplight on her face made me cry afresh. She went and woke Flora, who put on her grey wrapper and came in and sat in the rocking-chair. She wanted to make me something, but I said No. The lamp began to smoke. The smoke went right up to the ceiling and smelt very strong and sweet, like rose-geranium. I began to cry and laugh at the same time. Flora and Emma were talking together, but other people seemed to be talking, too, and the voice at the head of the bed."

A few days later Lucy became very sad. She could neither pray nor do anything around the house. She sat by the window all day long.

In the afternoon she pointed at the road which went off towards the mountains between rows of trees, and said: "Flora, what does it matter where the road goes?"

Emma and Flora were taking apart Emma's blue silk dress and making a blouse. A moth crawled on the window-pane. Emma said: "Get the swatter, Lucy."

Lucy got up, then sat down and said again: "What does it matter?"

She got out the scribbler and wrote in it from memory all the stanzas of "Return, O heavenly Dove, return."

After supper she seemed more cheerful. They were sitting in the kitchen evenings now, because it was warmer. There was no light but one lamp, so the room was quite dark, making the red circles around the stove-lids show.

Lucy suddenly stood up.

"Emma, Emma, Flora. I see God."

She motioned towards the stove.

God, God sat on the kitchen stove and glowed, burned, filling all the kitchen with a delicious heat and a scent of grease and sweetness.

Lucy was more conscious of his body than his face. His beautiful glowing bulk was rayed like a sunflower. It lit up Flora's and Emma's faces on either side of the stove. The stove could not burn him.

"His feet are in hell," she remarked to her sisters.

After that Lucy was happy for a long time and everything seemed almost the way it had been the winter before, except for Lucy going to the Baptist church and prayer-meeting by herself.

She spoke often of joining. It had happened once or twice that when people had wanted to join the church in the winter a hole had been broken in the ice to make a font. Lucy begged the minister that this might be done for her, but he felt that it was unnecessary in her case.

One had been a farmer, converted from drinking and abusing his

wife. He had chopped the ice open himself. One a young man, also a reformed drunkard, since dead.

Flora said: "Oh Lucy, wait till the ice goes out."

"Yes," Lucy said in bitterness, "and until my soul is eternally lost."

She prayed for an early spring.

On the nineteenth of March Flora woke up and heard the annually familiar sound, a dim roaring edged with noises of breaking glass.

"Thank goodness," she thought. "Now, maybe, Lucy won't even want to be baptized."

Everyone had heard the cracking start, off in the hills, and was at the bridge. Lucy, Emma, and Flora went too. The ice buckled up in shining walls fifteen or twenty feet high, fit for heavenly palaces, then moved slowly downstream.

Once in a while a space of dark brown water appeared. This upset Lucy, who had thought of the water she would be baptized in as crystal-clear, or pale blue.

The baptism took place on the twenty-fourth. It was like all the others, and the village was even used to such early ones, although they were usually those of fervent young men.

A few buggies were on the bank, those of the choir, who stood around in coats and hats, holding one hymn-book among three or four people. Most of the witnesses stood on the bridge, staring down. One boy or young man, of course, always dared to spit over the railing.

The water was muddy, very high, with spots of yellow foam. The sky was solid grey cloud, finely folded, over and over. Flora saw the icy roots of a tree reaching into the river, and the snow-banks yellow like the foam.

The minister's robe, which he wore only on such occasions, billowed until the water pulled it all down. He held a clean, folded handkerchief to put over Lucy's mouth at the right minute. She wore a robe, too, that made her look taller and thinner.

The choir sang "I am coming, Lord, coming now to Thee," which they always dragged, and "Shall we gather at the river where bright angel feet have trod?" After the baptism they were to sing something joyful and faster, but the sisters did not remain to hear it.

Lucy went under without a movement, and Flora and Emma thought she'd never come up.

Flora held Emma's heavy coat all ready to put around her. Rather unconventionally, Emma sat in the buggy, borrowed from Mrs. Captain Green, so as to drive off home as soon as Lucy reached the bank. She held the reins and had to keep herself from taking up the whip in her other hand.

Finally it was over. They put the dripping Lucy in the middle. Her hair had fallen down. Thank goodness they didn't live far from the river!

The next day she had a bad head-cold. Emma and Flora nursed her for a week and then the cold settled in her chest. She wouldn't take to bed. The most they could get her to do was to lie on the couch in the kitchen.

One afternoon they thought she had a high fever. Late in the day God came again, into the kitchen. Lucy went towards the stove, screaming.

Emma and Flora pulled her back, but not before she had burned her right hand badly.

That night they got the doctor, but the next night after Lucy died, calling their names as she did so.

The day she was buried was the first pleasant day in April, and the village turned out very well, in spite of the fact that the roads were deep with mud. Jed Leighton gave a beautiful plant he had had sent from the city, a mass of white blooms. Everyone else had cut all their geraniums, red, white and pink.

SNOW TIME

By OSWELL BLAKESTON

THERE was no one to talk to, now. Nurse was sometimes kind, but no comfort. You never knew how she was going to take things. She had laughed when he had said that banana fritters looked like fish which had lived on vegetables; and she had smacked him when he had passionately declared that sago looked like insects' eggs and that he wasn't going to eat nasty eggs. True, nurse had tried to make up for her temper afterwards. She had taken him to a heavenly little shop in the village, and asked him what he would like. There had been small sweets in the shape of hearts with mottoes written on them, and tiny carafes and jugs, and tiny playing-cards, and rings of frosted glass with paper cut-out figures of girls and boys who did acrobatic dances when you turned round the rings. There were nice things about nurse: but nurse was not mother!

Father hardly ever came to see him. He had but a dim impression of a tall man, in faultless clothes, who marched angrily about the castle, smoking French cigarettes which smelt like a meadow burning. Once, when he had been very ill, and he was always being sick, he had heard nurse talking about father. She had been sitting by his cot, near the thermometer which had seemed to be growing in a glass of water from a soaked wad of cotton wool: she had not known that he was awake. "Poor Master Kenneth," she had said to the night-nurse. "The master can't abide him seeing that he's so sickly. As if it were the kid's fault! Some do say that it's because the child's such a poor brat that he doesn't live with madame—although others have their tales about that. Of course, it's healthy for the child here: the doctors told madame he couldn't live a year in England. And, naturally, the master has to see to his business. . . . Poor mite! even if he is a bit of a handful sometimes."

Father didn't love him. Well, he had known that. It had been horrible to hear nurse say it, in so many words, but he had guessed it. He had never told mother that he had heard nurse gossiping. Some instinct had warned him that this was a subject mother would not wish to discuss. And if father disliked mother, too, there was another secret bond between him and her. But he would have liked to ask if he really were too ill to live in England.

It would be such fun to live in England. There were coloured pictures in a book: high hills and a crown of green trees set in light, white horses with yellow tails, and green fields falling down to rivers like the skirts of a party dress. Everything was so gracious in England, while Switzerland frightened him: the mountains, the snow, the castle, which

reminded him of an ogre's house. Years ago, when he had been a very small boy, he had, in a fever, wanted to post the whole castle to England, to get rid of it: he had warned nurse not to stick any stamps on the windows. Nurse had said: "Suppose we send a photo instead to daddy?" Suppose a soldier rushed into battle with a photo of a sword? Besides, he had doubted whether it would be possible to get a camera large enough to photograph so big a building.

In Switzerland there were no playmates. His mother had told him that there were no suitable companions for him in the village. He had asked her if he could have a pet—"one of those animals with fur which carry away things—a squiggle." She had laughed, kindly, "I'm afraid a 'squiggle' wouldn't be happy with us." He had grieved over that, and had been too discouraged to suggest a dog. She had given him a love-bird for his birthday. Lonely bird, shut in a square cage without a mate, he had plucked out his feathers in sheer desperation. Nurse had put a mirror in the case, and when the bird saw itself, it had had the pride to stop destroying its plumage. But a prowling cat had inserted a paw in the cage and smashed the mirror. The next morning Kenneth had found the bird again self-stripped of its beauty. "It's no use, he doesn't like staying with us," he had said.

Of course, there had been a mouse in the chimney; and he had loved to hear it scampering. But nurse had heard it, too; and she had promised to set a trap. He had begged her not to; but she had been obdurate. She had said that he was the obstinate one; but that just proved her obstinacy, didn't it? For a week the mouse had taken the cheese from the trap without being caught. Kenneth had rejoiced: it was, obviously, a magic mouse. On the eighth night, it had been caught—it had only three legs! Evidently, Mr. Mouse had had experience with traps in the kitchen, and had dragged its injured self upstairs for safety! Kenneth had cried for a whole morning, until nurse had threatened to give him "such a spanking."

So when nurse left him alone, there was nothing to do but to tell himself stories. His favourite started: "I'd like to change myself into an ant and go up to an ant and ask him if I looked like an ant." To-day, though, it was snowing. He could only look out of the nursery window and feel ill inside.

He hated the snow. It had been snowing last year, when mother had died. White flocks skirled round the castle. He feared the snow. One evening, nurse had told him about ghosts, and he had run to mother; she had smiled and said that ghosts were only shadows. When the snow was on the ground and if the sun shone—as it often did in the clear Swiss winters—the shadows were powerful. If ghosts were shadows, then, after the snow, the ghosts came into their own. It was as if a great sheet had been spread over the earth for a motion-picture from the land of goblins to be projected on it. There was one shadow (made by a

tower, a buttress, part of a tree) which stretched itself just outside the nursery window in the afternoons, and looked very much like a dragon. He would never dare to walk in that shadow, in case it did monstrous things which could not be attributed to sun, tower, and pine branches. But he could not explain such fears to nurse; she would retaliate by giving him a good shaking. Oh! if only mother had lived—especially did he need a friend when it snowed, for that was a dangerous time.

Time passed so slowly, as he stood at the window with his pug nose pressed to the glass. At last, at long last, he heard nurse's steps in the corridor: she would be bringing his tray with lunch. "There you are, Master Kenneth; eat up all the nice fish and I'll be back in ten minutes with your sweet." He didn't like fish, and they were always giving it to him; it was something to do with his not being very strong. But he ate as much as he could because he knew that nurse would not allow him any sweet until he had eaten at least half of his first course.

Punctually, in ten minutes' time, he heard nurse's heels clicking on the polished floor. Would it be Felixstowe Tart or Apple Pie? "There you are, Master Kenneth: nice milk pudding!" "Not . . . not sago?" "Now, it doesn't do for a little boy to be fussy." "But, nurse, you know I can't eat sago. . . . It's . . . it's like horrid eggs." "I don't want any nonsense, Master Kenneth. You have all that milk pudding eaten by the time I come back, or I'll be angry." "Please, nurse. . . ." "Go on: no arguments, please." "If I try and eat it, nurse, will you take me for a walk after lunch?" "We'll see about that when you've finished everything on that plate. You know what happens to disobedient little boys, don't you?"

How could he—how could he ever eat those awful, slimy eggs? And yet, if he didn't eat them, nurse wouldn't take him out; and the afternoon would be so long, so unbearably long. Then he thought of the old cigarette-box which he had picked up on his last walk, when nurse had not been looking. It would not be honest, of course; but it would be nurse's fault for being so obstinate. Holding his breath, he pushed back his chair from the table and tiptoed over to the chest of drawers, where, in a drawer, under a pile of socks, he had hidden the cigarette-box. He found it. He brought it back to the table, his hands trembling with excitement. He opened the box and heard his heart thumping. He thought he must be brave, like the man in the fairy story who stole the fox and concealed it under his coat. All the time the magistrate was questioning the man, asking him whether he had stolen the fox, the fox was eating out his heart. They never learnt the truth from the man's own lips, but, at the end of his interrogation, he had fallen down dead!

Supposing he heard nurse's footsteps, while he still had the sago half-shovelled into the box? He gasped to think how angry nurse would be then. There would be no mercy for him. Was this why they called him weak, because he felt so frightened? At length he had the

box closed, had the box in his hands, had it buried beneath the stockings in the drawer. His cheeks were burning. There was a little sago, which he had not been able to get into the damp box, still on his plate. He smeared it all over the clean parts of the plate, and hid some of it under the spoon. Nurse would pardon that, would think it natural. How naughty he had been. Nurse was always saying: "If I were you, I'd do this or that, Master Kenneth." Well, he wasn't nurse, and he had done this wicked thing. But now a conscience awoke in him, just as if he were part of nurse, after all, and tormented him. If only he could be certain that there would be time before nurse returned, he would recover the sago from the drawer, put it in his plate, and eat it. He had a vision of nurse walking down the corridor towards him and getting smaller and smaller, her heel-taps fainter and fainter, as she drew nearer to him.

"Well, Master Kenneth, I do believe you enjoyed your pudding." "I didn't, nurse—really I didn't. I only . . . ate it . . . so that you'd take me for a walk." "No walk for you, Master Kenneth! You look a flushed little boy. I wouldn't be surprised if you had a temperature. You'll go to bed this afternoon, and have a nice sleep." He clenched his small fists. "No, nurse—I must, I must go out. . . ." He was almost sobbing. "Come along, Master Kenneth, into bed you go this minute. Because you've been a good boy about your pudding, it doesn't mean that you can take liberties."

And if he didn't go for a walk, he couldn't take out the heavy, sticky cigarette-box and drop it somewhere in a ditch. It would be fatal to throw it from the window: nurse or one of the servants would be sure to see it on the white snow, and investigate. Yet he didn't want to stay in the room with that beastly sago hidden in the drawer. There was something unclean about it being there: it made him feel filthy. And everything was ten thousand times more horrible because it was snowing. And nurse would go down into the kitchen to talk with cook; and the kitchen was so far away, down so many passages and staircases. Nurse would never hear him, not if he screamed himself into a faint. And there was no bell in his room, because nurse said that people didn't wait on little boys. He would be completely alone.

"You don't want to be ill, do you, Master Kenneth? So mind you have a good sleep. I'm going to draw the blinds to help you. My! I've never seen you look so feverish all of a sudden before. We've got to take care, haven't we? You might be in for something. If you're not well by to-morrow morning, we'll have the doctor. Be a good boy, and perhaps I'll get you some sweeties to-morrow." The door closed. He was alone in the dark room, but he knew the snow was falling outside softly. He tried to think of pleasant things, to keep up his courage. He thought of the pleasant gardener who had put a clothes-peg on the end of his nose to imitate an elephant, and who had played a penny whistle with one of his nostrils. He thought of the man who threw crumbs to the birds

in the square, and who looked, from the end of the street, as if he were juggling with sparrows. And then, because he had been tired out by his naughtiness, he fell asleep.

He dreamed that he was in a train. Suddenly the train stopped, and people called out "All Change Here." But the train had stopped in a tunnel. How could one get out? He shouted and . . . he woke up. The tunnel . . . the tunnel was outside the window, was a dark dragon. He knew that it was there. The room was so still. Then there was a breath of air, and the curtain slid back a little. Through the chink he could see the "thing" peering at him. He knew that his lungs were going to burst. Dear God . . . He heard a scream—it was a scream from the dragon. How? How could a dragon be frightened of a little boy who had no father or mother to protect him, who had been left all alone for the afternoon? But the great black ghost had slipped away from the window as if it had been terribly frightened.

Then he realised . . . realised that there must be something else which had frightened the dragon, something which was in the room with him. His terrified eyes turned to the chest of drawers where he had hidden the sago. The eggs, the nasty, horrid eggs had hatched! Long, white things were crawling towards the bed, waving their sightless heads to get the direction where they sensed that the small boy was lying, then worming their way forward!

THE ALBIONS' SECRET

By JOHN PUDNEY

"O H, mother, mother! Look at the elephant coming down the garden," cried Lily.

Her mother was thinking just then, however, and disregarded Lily's remark. Her mother was thinking about possessions.

So Lily ran and opened the front door, ready to let the elephant in. She was thrilled at the unusual visitor; though, judging by her mother's reticence, she should not have shown excitement. She had rarely seen elephants. Though she was receiving a normal education, regular nourishment, and a proper home environment, her opportunities of seeing them were almost negligible.

Something had happened at last: she had always known that it would.

She opened the door wide and smiled. She heard the gentle, rather ponderous breathing, and the muffled but eager tread. She was impressed by the physical dimensions. She noticed that the eyes were twinkling like raindrops.

"I'm your Uncle Arthur," said the elephant.

"Oh, mother, mother! The elephant that has come says that he is Uncle Arthur!"

There was no reply. Her mother must be thinking. How rude. Lily smiled at the visitor who was standing patiently upon the threshold, completely filling it. Then she popped her head round the sitting-room door and interrupted her mother's thoughts.

"He says he's Uncle Arthur," she said.

"Who does?" said Mrs. Albion.

"Sh!" Lily made a polite gesture. "The elephant."

"What elephant, Lily?" Her mother looked cross.

"The elephant I told you about, who has just called."

"Lily! Come right in." Mother was wasting time, but she was very cross. "Now tell me: who is at the door?"

"Uncle Arthur."

Mrs. Albion winced. The child was imaginative, of course, that was the danger—a misfortune, in fact. *Uncle Arthur*. "I'll go to the door myself," she said.

They found the elephant wedged. Mrs. Albion screamed. Lily felt sorry for him, and frightened. He was stuck fast, more in than out.

"Help!" cried Mrs. Albion. "A zoo's escaped. Help! We shall be trampled underfoot!"

"Oh, mother! He's terribly stuck. What can we do for him?"

"Come away, Lily. Quick! Run round to the Bridies and telephone.

Call the police—and its keeper. I'll come with you. What a horrid great ugly brute!" For a moment she hesitated to convince herself that he was wedged. She snatched an umbrella from the hall stand. She was outraged—she would defend her home. She had half-turned towards the back door when the kindly voice of the elephant again declared: "I'm your Uncle Arthur."

Mrs. Albion stopped. It was all very well for Lily, who was an imaginative child, to see elephants and hear them talk, but she was proud of the fact that she herself was practical. She had never heard elephants talk. She disbelieved them. There was no doubt, however, that an elephant was wedged in her front door.

"I'm your Uncle Arthur," he repeated.

A grey fear then enveloped her. When the Albions feared, it was grey and bleak in the house, just like a November fog outside in the streets. The sitting-room sweated an emulsion of mistrust from its scrolled, crenellated and patterned contents. The hall stand wilted in abject submission: the stairs looked weak and rickety at the first fearful thought. Then Mrs. Albion, in a grey voice, addressed the elephant.

"Will you repeat that, please?" she said through clenched teeth. She was desperate. One thought had taken the place of all others. It was a legend in the family that Uncle Arthur—whose uncle he was had never been clear—had been sent to prison for a long term, convicted of an unmentionable crime. That thought alone induced Mrs. Albion to address the elephant.

"He's said it twice, mother," cried Lily; "and he must be terribly uncomfortable. . ."

"Quiet, Lily! I wish him to repeat that remark."

The elephant eased his position. He regretted his haste in accepting Lily's invitation to come in. "I'm your Uncle Arthur," he repeated with some lack of enthusiasm. But Lily clapped her hands and danced round in front of him.

"I'm Lily!" she cried. "Little Lily!" Her voice rang out bravely against the grey pallor of the lincrusta in the hall. The bead curtains danced with her.

"But this is absurd. What will the neighbours think? Stop dancing, Lily! Go and play quietly out at the back." Mrs. Albion slammed the umbrella into the wickerwork stand. Her worst fears were realised, though she was satisfied now that she was in no danger of physical attack. "And, Lily! Not a word of this, mind. If the Bridie kids are nosey, you had better ignore them. Now, out you go, and let me think in peace."

"Goodbye, Uncle Arthur!" She ran out into the cold afternoon sunshine. How rude mother had been. Uncle Arthur was standing there so meekly. Probably he was most uncomfortable, too. The least one could have done would have been to offer him a bun. Lily was

a kind, sweet-tempered child in spite of Mrs. Albion's vigilance. It took more than a church-going mother and her rigid interpretations of truth to discover, much less disturb, the child's convictions. Lily had always believed that an amazing event would happen one wet afternoon. Hundreds of times she had imagined visitors such as Uncle Arthur appearing at the front door. Now it had happened, quite suddenly. A new truth had been added to life. While mother was trying to fit the visitor into the anxious interior of "The Croft," she would run out of the "Tradesmen Only" and buy him a bun—or two, for there was twopence in her savings-box. She was not afraid of Uncle Arthur being sent away, because there had been undeniable anxiety in her mother's voice. It meant that the front door must be shut at once, before the Starks, from opposite, saw in. Besides, Uncle Arthur was wedged more in than out. It would be a job to get him out again. So Lily skipped off through the "Tradesmen Only," and ran to the baker's shop, ignoring the Bridie children who called after her at the corner.

Mrs. Albion stood alone with the elephant in the frightened house. She was trying to calculate.

It was more difficult than calculating the hire-purchase terms of a mahogany radiogram (like the Bridies, only better): more difficult than finding the money for the motor-car insurance (the Starks had only a three-wheeler); more difficult than what to wear at the Garden Fête; and more difficult, even, than entertaining George's important client to tea on a Sunday. Mrs. Albion was trying to calculate the exact dimensions of the rumour she remembered hearing in family circles concerning Uncle Arthur and his unmentionable crime. It had not been mentioned for ten years. George had always declared, looking down his nose, that there were ugly things in many families which never need come to light if they were never mentioned in any circumstances. One must never take a risk with a thing like that, he had said. It led to loss of prestige, goodwill, and—inevitably—clientele. And then, of course, there were the neighbours. Look at Mrs. Carver, when her sister was divorced. She was hardly able to go out of the house: and everyone sent her anonymous letters. Mrs. Albion turned over in her grey-curtained mind the words, "I'm your Uncle Arthur." There was something sinister, something irrevocably destructive, about them. From an elephant, too.

She was now satisfied that the patient beast that stood in front of her had said these words, and might say them again. She had heard, too, of elephants trumpeting, particularly when cornered. There was no time to be lost. The Bridies, the Starks, or (heaven forbid!) one of the snooty Miss Carvers, might at any moment pass, and, looking through the laurels, see the elephant. Worse still, they might hear him repeat his declaration.

"Come in," she said, "if you must. I'll put you into the conservatory till George comes home from work."

Wherever he had come from, Uncle Arthur could never have encountered a less gracious invitation. The front door was pressed right back on its hinges as he strained to squeeze his hindquarters through. Mrs. Albion, her hands clumsy with fear and disgust, fretted with the bead curtains, and opened invitingly wide the double doors leading to the conservatory. It was fortunate that for privacy George had whitewashed the conservatory glass. The neighbours had seemed to live at one time upon the doorstep of the sitting-room which could be seen through the glass. George had determined that there were limits to neighbourliness: there was a point when you must keep yourself to yourself. That determination, Mrs. Albion reflected, had arisen at the time he had become junior churchwarden. Now the whitened panes were to succour them in a situation which might imperil the very foundations of life at "The Croft." It showed, in a way, how guidance, and a little common sense, sometimes followed services unstintingly given: services which, at the time of their being offered to George, were considered to be of questionable value, as the Carvers were the only people in the road who went to church, and they alone were to witness the dignity of his duties.

Mrs. Albion sighed. There were no plants in the conservatory: nothing but a few gardening tools and Lily's pram. She quickly moved these to one side. The elephant was still straining at the front door. Every moment jeopardised her position. The latter end of that elephant writhing in her front door, were any of the neighbours or the tradesmen to catch sight of it, would give rise to endless rumour and speculation. Sooner or later Uncle Arthur's name would be mentioned. No. Emergency action was necessary. Her own hat hung upon the kitchen door. In another moment she had withdrawn one of its pins and was out through the "Tradesmen Only." There she met Lily carrying her little bag of buns.

"Oh, mother, what are you going to do?" cried Lily, waving her bag.

"Oh, mother, I am excited!"

"Sh-sh! Remember what I told you about keeping to yourself. You'd better stay quietly in the kitchen till I call you."

"But you're not going to hurt Uncle Arthur with that pin?"

"Be quiet and mind your own business." Mrs. Albion's voice swept through the shrubberies like the grey wind.

"Shan't!" cried Lily defiantly. The shrubberies were lit with tinsel, like Christmas-trees. The "Tradesmen Only" swung musically upon its hinges, twinkling with iridescent red like a huge garnet brooch. Uncle Arthur was just round the corner!

"What, Lily!" Mrs. Albion, half-stifled by the heavy air of the frightened shrubberies, was suddenly at a loss for words. She turned quickly and ran to the front door, from which the straining bulk of the

elephant's haunches still protruded. All was lost if anyone should see her now, or overhear the cries of Lily. She staked her all on the efficacy of the hatpin which she jabbed into a soft part of the great mammal which was inflicting such terror upon her home.

Immediately there was a roar, and the next moment the elephant was inside the house. With the voice of a church organ he emitted peal upon peal of sound.

"I'm your Uncle Arthur—Ouh!" he trumpeted. "I'm your Uncle Arthur—Ouh!" Mrs. Albion slammed the door after him. He went through the hall into the conservatory. But he continued to cry out. The neighbours could hardly fail to hear those cries from the conservatory. The elephant sat down on the place where she had jabbed him.

"Can't you be quiet now?" shouted Mrs. Albion.

The trumpetings continued.

What have we done, thought Mrs. Albion, that we should have been visited in this way. She thought of a dozen mean things she had done during the last few weeks. Not one of them seemed to justify the visitation of an elephant.

The trumpeting filled the house. The glass of the conservatory rattled. Lily came running in from the kitchen. Mrs. Albion made as if to slap her daughter for disobedience, for spending her pocket-money, and because she was afraid to slap the elephant. But Lily was too quick for her.

"Poor Uncle Arthur," she cried, going into the conservatory. "But look what I've brought for you. Buns!"

The trumpeting ceased.

With a benign expression, Uncle Arthur reached out his trunk and took the buns. He was satisfied: he liked buns. "Run round to the baker's and get half-a-dozen more, Lily. No, get seven—for sixpence." Mrs. Albion could not conceal her relief. Seven buns, though extravagant, was not an impossible price to pay for security, till George came home from work. "And if you meet anybody, and they ask you what the noise was, say it was the wireless."

"Don't go and hurt him again while I'm gone, mother. It's going to be such fun having him." The colours and shapes of a tropical jungle danced in profusion around her as she passed up the few yards of drive to the front gate. The late afternoon light which laved the tidy avenue in pungent ordinariness, swirled about her in magical effulgence. Something had happened. The avenue, the drive, the front door, the wicker hat stand, and, most of all, the whitewashed conservatory would never be the same again. An elephant had come.

"Lily, dear!" Mrs. Bridie leant over her gate. "Are you all right at home? We thought we heard such a funny sound just now. I was just going to send to see. . ."

"Mother says it's our wireless." Nobody could tell an untruth and be aware of the glory of the afternoon.

"Oh, a *new* wireless?" Mrs. Bridie felt that she had not been kept abreast with local affairs. Lily skipped on towards the baker's. Even her father passed unnoticed. Uncle Arthur will have had nine buns, she thought: how satisfied he will feel.

But all was not well at "The Croft."

George Albion, on his return from business, had not expected to find his wife conversing with an elephant.

"You had no business to come here," she was saying. "I don't care whether you starve or what happens. I'm not going to be made the talk, and, of course, the laughing-stock of the whole avenue. . . ." George stood still. It was not an elephant: it couldn't be.

"What *are* you talking about?" he asked, ignoring the elephant altogether.

"Can't you see, George?" snapped Mrs. Albion.

"Yes," he said, relieved that she saw it too. "An elephant."

"I should think it *is* an elephant."

"But what made you get it?" George Albion was losing his self-control. All things considered, his business reputation, his authority, his office in the church. . . .

"It came. It walked in." Hysterically she turned again to address the elephant. "I don't care whether you say you're Uncle Arthur or not. . . ."

"I am your Uncle Arthur," said the elephant.

Mrs. Albion faced her husband as she would have faced death. There was no pride or arrogance or even cunning left in her demeanour. She looked sallow, ruffled with anxiety: and all the Albions' fears emerged from their hiding-places behind the bead curtains.

"Does anyone know?" said Albion at last.

"Only Lily."

"Where is she?"

"Buying buns."

Mr. Albion glared. Buns on Sundays, yes—but on weekdays it was just the kind of extravagance he was determined to put down. His small anger vented his huge quaking fear. "Why buns?" he roared.

"For the elephant."

Mrs. Albion's words laid him like ashes. Nobody spoke till Lily returned. Nobody answered when she asked if she should give Uncle Arthur the buns. They watched her feed sixpennyworth of buns to the elephant. Then George announced that he would speak to the elephant alone. The legend about Uncle Arthur's crime had been unmentionable.

When they had gone, he lit the gas and questioned the elephant for an hour. He asked every question that a careful business man could ask an elephant. There was no reply at all. Then, looking closely at his

visitor, he noticed that the small eyes were closed. The elephant was asleep.

That night, the Albions came to the most critical decision of their lives: they decided to keep Uncle Arthur concealed in the conservatory. It was the only safe course. With constant attention and vigilance they would be able to protect themselves from a danger which both agreed would destroy those virtues more precious than life itself, the respect of their neighbours, financial stability, and the support of the church. In the course of time the elephant might be induced to explain himself.

"Shall I buy some more buns for Uncle Arthur?" said Lily at breakfast.

"Yes, dear. Run and get seven more."

With the sixpence warm in her hand, Lily, ran out into the bright new morning.

"What, more buns?" said the baker's wife. "You are a hungry girl, Lily."

"We shall need plenty of buns just now," replied Lily, with joy in her voice which the baker's wife failed to understand.

Plenty of buns were needed at "The Croft."

During the next fortnight they tried every form of food, from dog-biscuits to rice-pudding. Uncle Arthur disliked them all. With anything but buns he grew restless, muttering to himself, and threatening to trumpet as he had done when Mrs. Albion jabbed him. He needed plenty of buns. It varied from three to four dozen. It was no good running and buying them by the bag. They were sent round by special delivery.

"And the more buns they has," said the baker's wife to Mrs. Bridie, "the thinner they gets. Like a pair of shadows, though Lily don't seem to suffer. . . ."

Mrs. Bridie nodded. "I shouldn't wonder," she said, "if there's not something going on. Just what it is, I can't get at. . . ."

Everybody suspected something, but nobody suspected that the Albions were keeping an elephant.

Uncle Arthur said very little for three weeks, but he seemed to think his own thoughts, not snatchily as Lily had seen her mother think about possessions, but rhythmically like rain on wet afternoons. He was a pleasure to watch.

George Albion took to sitting by the conservatory door in the evenings, at first in order to carry on interrogation, but later because he, too, found pleasure in watching Uncle Arthur think. Sometimes he caught himself thinking himself: and one evening he read a book to Lily and the elephant.

Mrs. Albion did not join them until a week or so later, when the intensity of local gossip drove her out of the sitting-room. They gave

up lighting the gas there because people were always calling on some pretext or other and mentioning casually the subject of buns.

Three to four dozen buns a day for three people.

Every other evening one of the Miss Carvers would call to see if her cat had strayed. Young Stark would pop in to borrow insulating tape. The Bridies—any pretext was enough for them.

Mrs. Albion became much kindlier when she met them all in the street, however: and everyone agreed that Lily was radiant. Lily had lost her spots: and that couldn't be buns.

Mrs. Albion found that sitting with Uncle Arthur calmed her. Sometimes she held Lily's hand, and sometimes when they were all sitting round together she sang rather sentimental songs. The bead curtains clicked merrily and Uncle Arthur's eyes twinkled. Except for the expense of buying buns, fears and anxieties vanished from the Albions' home. They had sold the car and sold the wireless set, and were wondering what to give Uncle Arthur for Christmas, when they realised that they had very little money left.

"Though we shall always be quite happy on what I earn," beamed George Albion.

"I think it's time Uncle Arthur worked for his living, too," said Lily. "I'll tell him there's no more buns, and see what he does."

"He's a lazy old thing, bless him," sighed Mrs. Albion. "It's a pity he costs us so much in buns; but then, I must say I don't grudge it."

That night Lily told the elephant that there were no more buns, when she went to kiss him good-night. They all laughed when she said it. They wondered if it would make him think of something new to say. But he thought ponderously that evening and went to sleep early.

In the morning he had gone.

"How he went through that door beats me!" muttered Albion.

"We shall have to tell the baker not to send the buns," sighed Mrs. Albion.

Lily cried a little at first. But the world had not changed: it was still full of surprise. Something had happened. They bought her a small grey toy elephant for Christmas. But her father and mother laughed more often now, and they all agreed that it was not a good substitute for Uncle Arthur, so they burnt it.

In the avenue and round the corner, the inhabitants discussed the Albions' order for buns, whenever more than one of them was gathered together. Its sudden cessation did nothing to diminish speculation. It gave the story a finality which added to its relish. They discuss it still: and if the Albions overhear them, they just laugh.

A KASHMIR IDYLL

By MULK RAJ ANAND

IT was about ten years ago during a brief visit to Kashmir that the incident I am going to relate took place. But neither time nor space has blurred the deep impression it made on me then, and it has haunted me for many days, so that I must needs put it down.

There were originally four of us in the party, including myself, the three others being a tall, imposing Sikh gentleman, both tailor-made and God-made; a sensitive young poet, a Kashmiri whose family had emigrated to the plains and made good as Kashmiris always do when once they have left the land where, though nature is kind and generous, man has for centuries most foully and cruelly oppressed man; and a hill boy who cooked for us.

We had loaded our baggage on a tonga and walked the three hundred and seventy-five miles on the road from Jammu across the Himalayas in slow stages, by the beds of the silent Ravi and the gorging Chenab. On the peak of the Banihall, we had held conversation with the wind that comes from the Kashmir valley, bearing a load of loveliness and pain, the golden exultation of the saffron and the white sigh of a people who toil unrewarded.

We had descended to the natural spring of Ver-Nag, from which a few drops of water trickle into a stream which becomes the river Jhelum at Islamabad, and which, dividing the whole valley into two halves, flows into the lake Wular, and then cuts its way through two hundred miles of mountains into the plains.

From Ver-Nag, a village of dark and labyrinthine streets full of small mud huts, the many-coloured flowers on whose roofs give no hint of the misery which dwells within, we had traversed into the main valley, a dusty road bordered by cubist poplars and cypresses.

We had made our headquarters in a houseboat at Srinagar. Then, taking the advice of a tourists' guide which the government of His Highness the Maharaja of Kashmir has designed specifically for the use of the English visitors, though a few Indians also take advantage of it if they have a smattering of the wonderful official language, we had decided to undertake short trips to the sub-valleys and the unspoiled outlying ranges of the Himalayas within the borders of Kashmir.

We visited the Sonamarg valley, where the scarlet eyes of the morning are blinded by the glare of the snow that lies perpetually on the mountain peaks leading through the Zogila Pass to Chotta Tibet, and where the sleep of the night is continually disturbed by the growling of the angry Indus rushing through the glaciers and across huge stones and boulders to its tyrannical passage in the Punjab.

We pushed by a difficult track across a crumbling mountain to the cave of Amarnath, where the dripping of water from melting crystals has formed a snow image in the shape of a phallus which the superstitious go to worship in thousands at a particular time of the year, believing it to be the penis of the Great God Siva.

We went to Gulmarg, the valley of wild roses; to Lilanmarg, where the lilies of the field grow for miles and miles and miles, angelic and melancholy; we ascended to Aparwalt, the highest peak in Kashmir, on top of which is a crystal-clear pool which echoes back the faintest whisper.

We saw Gandarbal and Hari Parbat, the Shalimar and the Nishat; we went everywhere, devouring the beauty of Kashmir's landscapes, trudging along its byways and loitering among its stars, squandering whole days and weeks in search of exquisite moments.

And then, there was nothing left to do except sail along the waterways of the valley, to seek new harbours for our houseboat in the Dal lake and in the shadows of the various gardens, wherever the caprice of our idle destinies directed the heart-shaped oars of our boatmen.

A cousin of the poet of our company, a nobleman and courtier of His Highness the Maharaja, who had sought us out in an obscure corner of the Dal, and showered the blessings of fruit and meat and drink upon us with a generosity that betokened his eminence and his affluence, offered us the hospitality of an island he possessed nearby. We had been finding the great man's hospitality rather embarrassing because it involved us in a friendship with the great man which we could not spontaneously accept, for His Grace was rather a silly young man with the manners of a lout and a high blood-pressure in his too, too opulent flesh. Though grateful for his kindness, we excused ourselves by saying that we were intending soon to complete our tour of the valley by going in our kitchen boat to the Wular. But it was not so easy for us to escape from the tentacles of courtesy that he spread around us by that slick and sure turn of phrase that had so obviously earned him his high position at court. He suggested that if we did not accept his hospitality he would like to accept our hospitality and accompany us to the Wular "in your kitchen boat, for a change, because," he said, "I am tired of the grand style in which I have to live, and would like to be one of you."

We were so indebted to the Nawab Zaffar Ullah Khan, as the worthy was called, for the many favours he had heaped on us, that we naturally could not refuse him, even though he became more patronising, and added that not only would he like to come with us, but two of his most intimate friends would like to accompany us also, and that he would like to supply provisions and order extra boatmen for our service on the way.

We were in for it, and we accepted all his offers, because it would have been more difficult to argue with him about this. So we let ourselves become completely ineffectual pawns in his high hand. And, accom-

panied by him and his friends (a surly little judge of the High Court of Kashmir, and a most superficial young trader in hides and skins), one evening we started.

The shades of night were falling and we floated through heaven and earth in a dream, as yet slightly disturbed by the Nawab and his companions.

The river flowed and our boat flowed with it, without much help from our boatman, his wife, his sister, or his little daughter.

But we had hardly rolled down to the silent places of our heart when dinner was announced.

The Nawab had brought a sumptuous meal, prepared by his servants, all ready to be served: rice, coloured and scented with saffron, curries of fowls perfumed with musk, and goblets of a champagne of 1887.

Having compromised us into accepting his delicious food, it was only natural that the Nawab should deem it fit to amuse us with the gifts of his speech. He told a few dirty stories and then embarked on a discourse of which the ribaldry was so highly spiced with a deliberate obscenity that, whoever felt nauseated or not, I at least, who have never been over-righteous, fell aside, thought of the pride of my emotions, made my words the stars, and surrendered myself to the bosom of the night.

When we awoke at dawn, our boat had unbarred the flood-gates and glided into a veritable ocean of light. For as far as I could see, for miles and miles, the azure waters of the Wular spread around us, fluttering, a vast expanse of mercury, within the borders of the fiery, sun-scorched hills.

The Nawab sought to entertain us with a song. But his voice was cracked and only his two friends sat appreciatively acclaiming his genius, while we wandered off to different parts of the boat, helping with the cooking, dressing, or lazily contemplating the wizardry by which nature had written a poem of broken glass, crumbling earth and blue-red fire. Truly, the Wular is a magnificent spectacle under the red sky at morning.

I gazed upon the placid plain of this water, spell-bound, enchanted. I lent myself to the whispers of the rippling breeze that was awakening the sleepy lotuses; tempted by an unbearable desire to be one with it, I plunged headlong into its midst and bathed to my heart's content. Then I sat, sedulously noticing the blandishments of the elements from the shadow of a canopy under which the Nawab and his friends played cut-throat.

By ten o'clock we had crossed the lake to Bandipur, a dull, insignificant little village, on the road to Gilgit, the last stronghold of British-Indian power before the earth ventures out into the deserts of Central Asia, uncharted except by shepherds, till the Soviets brought there the steel plough of prosperity.

The Nawab had ordered the Tcehsilder to bring him ten chickens,

five dozen eggs, and some fruit for our delectation. He took us about to the chief houses of the village to show us, or rather to show himself, off to the abject inhabitants of the township.

Our boatman came running and said that we should hurry because he wanted to row across the middle of the lake before noon, as a squall generally arose in the Wular every day at noon, and it was likely to upset the boat if the vessel had not already crossed the danger zone before midday.

The Nawab abused him in Kashmiri, a language in which curses seem more potent than prayers.

We pressed the boatman's point, and since His Grace could not swear at us, he said he would get a man on *begar* to help the boatman and his family to row across the lake more quickly. And he delayed.

The boatman came again after half an hour and caught us all waiting impatiently for the Nawab's return from a visit to the lavatory. His Grace had suddenly thought it fit to have a hair-cut and a turkish bath in a hamam, and he didn't care what happened to us. When he did emerge from his ablutions, and heard not only the insistent appeals from the boatman, but our urgent recommendations, as a mark of his favour, clemency, or whatever you may call it, he forthwith stopped a young lad of the village, who was walking along the cobbled high street, and ordered him to proceed to our boat and help to row it to Srinagar.

"But Srinagar is fifty miles away, sire," said the young man, "and my mother has died. I am on the way to attend her funeral."

"You dirty swine, dare you refuse!" snarled the Nawab. "You are a liar."

"No, Nawab Sahib," said the man, joining his hands. "You are like the God in mercy and greatness. Please forgive me. I am footsore and weary after a twenty-mile march in the mountains, where I went to fetch my uncle's mare. And now my mother has died, and I must see the Mullah about securing a place for her burial."

"Run. Run towards the boat," bawled the Nawab, "or I'll have you flogged by the Thanedar. Do you know that it is the kingdom of which I am a nobleman. And you can't refuse to do *begar*."

"But, Sarkar——" murmured the young Kashmiri, his lips trembling with the weight of a protest which could not deliver itself in the face of the Nawab, which glistened not only with the aura of light that the barber's massage had produced, but with the anger that the man's disobedience had called forth.

"Go to the boat, you son of an ass!" shouted the Nawab, and raised his hand.

At the merest suggestion of the Nawab's threat to strike, the young man began to cry, a cry which seemed childish and ridiculous in a grown-up person, particularly because there were no tears in the boy's large, wideawake eyes. And he moaned, "Oh, my mother! Oh, my mother!"

suddenly, mechanically, in a voice which seemed to express more that racial cowardice of the Kashmiri, which has been bred by the oppression of one brutal conqueror after another, than his own very real hurt.

But the Nawab was too thick-skinned to see the hurt in the boy's soul. He looked at the big eyes weeping without tears, and heard the shrill crescendo of his cry, and began to laugh.

"Let us leave him, Nawab Sahib," we said. "We will give the boatman a hand and row across the lake to safety if we hurry."

"Wait, wait," the Nawab said, as he caught hold of the man by his left ear and, laughing, dragged him towards the boat.

The *begari*, who had begun to cry at the merest suggestion of a threat, howled the heavens down at the actual impact of the Nawab's hand on his body, while the Nawab, who had only laughed derisively at first, now chuckled with a hoarse laughter which flushed his cheeks.

The man extricated his ear from the Nawab's grasp as we were about five yards from the boat and, perhaps because he thought he had annoyed His Grace by so overt an act of disobedience, he knelt down at his feet, and, still weeping, he joined his hands and began to draw lines on the earth with his nose as a sort of penance for his sin.

At this the Nawab burst with a redoubled laughter so that his face, his form, seemed to swell to gigantic proportions and tower above us all.

"Look! . . ." he said, flourishing his hands histrionically, without interrupting his laughter.

But the situation, which had been tense enough before, had become very awkward now, as the man grovelled in the dust and rolled about, weeping, whining, whimpering and moaning, and sobbing hysterically with the most abject humility.

"Don't weep, don't moan, fool," said the Nawab, screwing his eyes, which were full of the tears of laughter, and he turned to our boatman, saying: "Lift the clown from there and put him on the boat."

The boatman obeyed the commands of the Nawab, and His Grace having stepped up to the deck behind the *begari*, we solemnly boarded the vessel.

The *begari* had now presumably half decided to do the work, as, crying his hollow cry and moaning his weird moan, he spat on his hands and took up the oar.

The Nawab, who cast the shadow of his menacing presence on the boy, was more amused than ever, and he laughed hysterically, writhing and shaking as he stood, so that his two friends caught him in their grasp and laid him to rest under the canopy. He sought to shake them off with the weight of his belly, with the wild flourish of his hands, and the reverberating groans of speech which came from his round red cheeks muffled with continuous laughter.

The boat began to move, and, as the heart of his oar tore the water

aside, the *begari* ceased to cry and moan with the same suddenness with which he had begun.

“Look!” the Nawab bellowed, his hysterical fit mounting on the diaphragm of a jerky cough which convulsed him as a spark of lightning shakes a cloud with thunder. “Look!” he said, and pointed towards the *begari*.

But the balls of his eyes rolled suddenly, his face flushed ghastly red and livid, his mouth opened, his throat twisted like a hemp rope, as if it were going to whistle, and his hand fell limp by his side.

We all rushed towards him.

One of his friends had put his hand on the Nawab’s heart, another was stroking his back.

A soft gurgle, like the last faint notes of lightning, reverberated from the Nawab’s mouth. Then there was the echo of a groan, and he fell dead. He had been choked by his fit of laughter.

The boat rolled on across the still waters of the Wular the way it had come, and we sat in the terrible darkness of our minds, utterly dumb and silent, till the *begari* began to cry and moan again:

“Oh, my mother! Oh, my mother!”

NO ACCIDENT

By ERIC WALTER WHITE

“OH, you dirty man!” hissed a woman standing near me, and I reflected how they loved it, as I lit another cigarette and swayed slightly from one leg to the other to refresh my muscles.

The hall was thick with smoke. In the ring Sparks junior, the ref, was counting “three, four, five, six . . .” while the Black Killer took an impertinent breather on the outside of the ropes, to the unconcealed impatience and disgust of his opponent, Yakob the Yidd.

“Boo!” roared the crowd. “Skunk!”

The Black Killer smiled derisively, put out a delicate dark-pink tongue—“eight, nine”—and slipped back through the ropes with a dangerous movement of his long feline body. Lightly, lightly he padded round the ring, with Yakob lowering and scowling at him under his smudgy eyebrows; then Yakob charged blunderingly like a clumsy heifer, and the Killer, pirouetting deftly, fouled him with a vicious back-kick from his right foot.

A storm of booing and cat-calls arose from the offended crowd. “I don’t believe you’re really enjoying it at all,” said a woman standing near me.

I watched Sparks junior intervene and wondered why the hell I’d come. The atmosphere was fetid with flat air, coarse smoke and the most primitive of human feelings: cruelty, cowardice and lust. One of my neighbours began edging closer to me in the crush, and his fortuitous fingers touched the outside of my trouser-pocket. Yakob was up again, looking black thunder beneath his brows, and the two started sparring for an opening. Suddenly the Killer curled up into a ball like a frightened louse and hurled himself across the ring at the Yidd. Yakob fell with a crash, and for a moment or two all I could see was a confusion of heaving tights, dirty blue and dirty pink.

“He’s got him!”

“No, he hasn’t!”

“Put the scissors on him, Ikey!”

Yakob’s head emerged and, bending over the Killer with all the concentration of a mother nursing her child, he did something to his man which I couldn’t see, but which brought forth excruciating howls as from a wild beast trapped in a snare. “What’s that?” I asked, turning on the pickpocket. “Eh?” he said, and stopped fingering my purse through the stuff of my trousers. “What’s that position?” I asked. “A rocking-cradle split,” he said. That was enough for me. I left.

"I don't believe you really enjoyed it a bit," said a woman to me in the street.

I took my cigarette out of my mouth and sneezed. "Why not?" I asked, fumbling for a handkerchief.

She ignored my question. "Anyway, what is a rocking-cradle split?" she said. "And why is the crowd always so interested in the knack of the thing—of the wrestlers, I mean?"

"I don't think you appreciate wrestling, madam, and I'm sure I don't," I said and, turning abruptly on my heel, I began to walk towards Baker Street.

"To hell with you!" said the woman, trotting along at my side. "You're pretty smart, aren't you? Why can't you choose to answer a civil question?"

I felt myself losing patience. "Why the hell should I?" I said. "It's not my business to talk to strange women in the streets and pander to their insipid, pointless curiosity."

"Then whose is it?" she said with genuine despair. "Who can I ask? Who can I talk to? No one. Not a soul." And she burst into tears.

I looked down at her: at her ugly hat, the slewed piece of fur that draggled over her shoulder, the shabby coat and skirt and the bulging shoes. "Can I help you with money?" I asked. "A ten-shilling note . . . ?"

She snuffled into her fur and then stamped her foot. "What do you take me for?" she asked indignantly.

I stared into her watery grey eyes and saw the crafty light in them flicker and go out. Suddenly I realised what she wanted; and at that a great weariness passed through my body and spirit like a wave. "All right," I said. "I'll listen. I'll try to answer. I'll give you the best I can. But don't ask too much of me."

She blew her nose into a ridiculously small handkerchief, and I hailed a taxi.

"What address did you give the driver?" she asked, as I slammed the door and sank back on the buttoned seat. The taxi turned in its own length and she swayed uncertainly over towards my corner, but I put out my hand to steady her.

"Mine," I answered crossly.

"Oh, I don't know that I want to go there. I think I'd rather we returned to my own apartment."

"I live in a bachelor flat, if that's what's worrying you," I said.

She sucked at her lower lip.

"It oughtn't to worry you," I continued. "You can't pretend you're not a married woman."

She started to cry again, snivelling softly and twisting her ridiculously small handkerchief round her little finger. A suspicion of some indefin-

able smell crossed my nostrils, but I couldn't tell whether it came from the woman or the cab.

"All right," she said quietly, as though to no one in particular. "I'll come." She looked at me over her fur. "My name's Mrs. Norris," she said.

"My name's Arbuthnot," I replied.

She kept her eyes fixed on me until the next street lamp splashed its light across my face. "Oh, no, it isn't," she said.

I was somewhat startled. "Well, perhaps not," I admitted. "Though I don't see how you knew—or what difference it makes. Why, for all I can tell, you may not be Mrs. Norris, either."

"I'm not," she said, and for the first time that evening I heard her laugh, a low sepulchral sort of laugh, not at all cheerful.

When I tapped on the window to tell the driver to stop, she pressed half-a-crown into my hand. "No nonsense, Mr. Arbuthnot," she said. "This may be your flat, but the taxi's mine."

In the sitting-room I lit the reading-lamp and the gas-fire. I moved one of the armchairs up for her in such a way that the light should fall on her face; but she immediately took the other chair. "What would you like to drink?" I asked. "Whisky, port . . .?"

"Tea, please," she said.

I went out into the kitchen, and as I put the kettle on to boil, I realised that this was her chance to investigate, now that my back was turned. What would she look at first?

But when I carried the tray in, I realised she had looked at nothing at all—she hadn't even taken the trouble to stir from the armchair while I had been out of the room; and, for the moment, I was disappointed.

"Here's the tea," I said, setting it down on a low table.

She started without preamble as I began to pour out: "I was a nurse. That's how I got to know him."

"Go on," I said, passing her the lemon. "Who do you mean, 'him'?"

"My husband, of course."

"Mr. Norris?"

"Well, Mr. Norris, if you like to call him so."

"Go on," I said. "I'm listening. You don't mind if I smoke, do you?"

She took a cigarette from my case. "He was only a patient, like all the others at first," she said, when I had given her a light. "Motor smash. A chip off his patella, and six stitches in a long scar running round the crown of his head—just as if he'd been scalped. I didn't pay much attention to him, until I came to shave off the hair from one side of his head. 'Spoiling my beauty, nurse,' he said with a twinkle in his eye. 'Spoiling your strength, Samson,' I thought, but I didn't say so. Of course, in a way, all my patients were helpless, but he was

particularly dependent on me, because although in his body he was splendidly strong, just as strong as he had been before his accident, he couldn't really move owing to the plaster cast they had made for his leg. He had to lie there with his leg stretched out under the cradle, while I cut his hair or shook up his pillow or took his temperature or sponged his lovely brown body."

She paused for a moment, and the ash fell from her cigarette. "Go on," I said encouragingly. "His lovely brown body . . ."

"His body . . ." she repeated softly. "It was October, and he had spent four weeks of the summer in Portugal. The sun had tanned his skin a rich, biscuity brown. I used to tease him about the shadow left by his bathing slip. . . ." She paused again.

"And so, when he left hospital, he married you," I prompted.

"I married him," she said with a curious little snap of her jaws, and I realised her teeth were false.

"But he was younger than you?"

"Eight years. But I didn't tell him that."

"Was that fair?"

"It was only fair on me."

"I think I shall like Mr. Norris," I said, stretching myself in the armchair.

Although her face was in the shadow, I saw a curious change pass over it, and her pupils seemed to contract. "I'd rather you didn't interrupt," she said—a trifle sharply, I thought. "You see, I fell in love with him."

Another nymphomaniac, I thought.

"I know what you're thinking," she said; "it's quite easy to read your thoughts, especially with the light shining on your mouth and eyes like that. Well, after all, you're right. I'd reached the dangerous age when a woman can no longer afford to be modest, to behave in a rational way, and to exercise her self-control if she is to avoid the bankruptcy of spinsterhood."

The facile rhetoric of this sentence offended me. I could not refrain from asking, "Is this a speech you've learnt by heart?"

"It is," she answered unflinchingly, "and you know you've got to listen to it."

"All right," I said. "Go ahead. I'll try not to interrupt again."

"Piers was an author and, like all you writers, often absent in spirit while present in body. I understood him well enough, and I was pleased to see him wrestling with the characters in his novels, although it bored me to have to read about them when the books were published. But what I was not prepared for was the emotional sterility that overtook him about a year after our marriage. It was a bitter thought to me that though I had given him all I was capable of giving—and I still think that complete self-surrender was the only justification for my conduct in marrying him—yet the sacrifice I daily offered up appeared to be woe-

fully inadequate. Not that he said anything or complained; but I just knew intuitively that my mind and body were insufficient to meet the claims he had the right to make of me—I heard it in his voice if he said he was going out; I saw it in his face when he wished me good-night; and, worst of all, I felt it in the uneasy pad, pad, padding of his spirit like a wild animal behind bars while he slept. I got to know this animal that was his spirit or his subconscious self or his psychic ego or whatever you like to call it, and in my own mind it became an obsession to be feared like death. How well I remember the evening we returned from seeing a performance of *Romeo and Juliet*. It was early summer, and the beauty of the play and the pulse of the remembered verse were urgent in my blood; but when I turned to Piers, I found he had already abandoned me and was fast asleep on his side of the bed. I lay awake for some time with my sorrow, occasionally running my fingers through his hair to feel the line of his old scar, when all of a sudden I realised that this spiritual werewolf had awoken and taken possession of the beautiful sleeping body beside me. A stranger and an enemy was prowling about that well-known mansion, and I, its lawful mistress, was shut out. I lay there, terrified, while a soft unrecognisable sigh escaped from Piers' lips. I don't know how to explain what I mean, but with that sigh the enemy in his spirit seemed to achieve a perilous freedom and reach out to something that existed far beyond my understanding or imagination. And then an appalling mistake happened, a catastrophe, for Piers turned to me in his sleep and showed me all the usual motions of his love; but waking immediately after, with a start of unforgettable horror, recoiled from me as if I were something obscene and burst into bitterest tears. From that moment I knew I had lost him, and I was consumed by jealousy."

She paused and began to sip her tea.

"That must be cold now," I said politely. "Let me give you another cup." Although I took pains to make my voice sound natural, I was really not unaffected by her tale. When I had agreed to allow her to come back with me after the wrestling match, I had realised only too well that the vacuum caused by her suffering and loneliness had led her to fasten on me as a likely victim, and that she would doubtless tap the warm vein of my sympathy and suck me dry before she left; but now I began to find my interest directed, not towards her, but towards Piers. "I think Piers is a fascinating character," I said, filling her cup. "What did you do after discovering his infidelity?"

"I killed him," she said.

I was so startled by this remark that I continued to fill her cup until the tea overflowed into her saucer and began to drip onto the carpet.

"That's quite enough, thank you," she said, tilting the spout up with her finger. "I'm afraid you've made rather a mess on your fawn-coloured carpet."

"I'm sorry," I faltered, and began mopping it up with my handkerchief.

"You mustn't think I set out deliberately to kill him," she continued. "My mind's not so original as all that. But there's no doubt that I did kill him." She lit another cigarette. "You see, when I realised the fact of his infidelity, as you call it, my jealousy led me to play a desperate game, for I was bent on discovering the other woman. To Piers' face I was all innocence: I never breathed a word of my suspicions, of the agonising certainty that was torturing me; but I redoubled my tenderness and began to watch over him with exaggerated care. When he slept, I tried to keep awake; when he left the house during the day, I checked up on his every movement. And I discovered nothing—nothing that I didn't know already. Then I fell ill: I couldn't sleep; the idea of food nauseated me; and when I looked in the glass, I saw a hag of a woman with unhealthy hair, lack-lustre eyes, pouchy skin and mud-like complexion, the sort of woman it was any decent man's duty to betray. Piers was very nice to me: he begged me to go away on a holiday, for he was sure what I needed was a rest-cure and a complete change of air. He said he would motor me wherever I liked, though he himself was too busy on his new novel to stay with me for long. In my folly I suspected a trap, which I determined to turn to my own advantage. Yes, he was quite right—I *did* want a holiday, and perhaps a fortnight at Bournemouth would do me a power of good. Piers seemed to be sincerely delighted. He went straight away to a travel agency and made all enquiries; but that very evening the same thing happened again—the enemy lurking in his spirit sallied forth, and my sleeping husband unwittingly betrayed us both. The next day I was really ill, with a temperature and a touch of fever. Piers was very concerned. He had a theatre engagement that evening with an old school friend and wanted to throw it up because of me; but I insisted on his going. 'It'll please me much more to know you're enjoying yourself,' I told him. 'Well, if you insist,' he said grudgingly, 'I'll go, though I shan't pay much attention to the play. It would be too bad to have to disappoint Norman, especially after promising to fetch him from Ealing with the car.' So he went, and I set my watch by the neighbouring church clock and followed the course of the play as well as I could from my sick bed. I found that not only did I succeed in timing the acts and intervals, but I was also able to establish telepathic contact with Piers in my mind, and instinctively knew the exact sequence of his emotional reactions. The play must have ended at ten minutes to eleven, for at that moment he fell back on to a much lower emotional plane. I supposed he was fetching the car, but I couldn't be certain. It became more difficult to follow him as he took Norman back to Ealing. As soon as I tried to fasten on him, he slipped through my grasp and I lost him completely, like a cake of soap in a bath. So I lay

there in bed—you might say, a kind of broadcasting station, potentially active, but in reality completely ineffective, as I could find no receiver tuned to my wave-length." She paused. "I may even have drowsed off for a moment," she continued, "when I was suddenly startled by a familiar danger-signal: the stranger and enemy in Piers' mind had escaped and was roaming abroad once more. My watch said twenty to twelve. I immediately summoned all the strength I could command. Here at last must be the woman I was seeking, the rival I was determined to remove; and as my jealous imagination built up her image, my hatred surged round it to destroy her. By an almost superhuman effort of will-power I lent arms, hands, fingers to my spirit: I grappled with this hostile emanation, I felt my fingers close round it, my nails cut through the elemental stuff, and I succeeded in throttling it. Then a warm glow of peace flooded my soul, and I sank back into a beatific slumber."

"What had happened?" I asked breathlessly.

She smiled, for she saw I was afraid. "Piers had been killed in a motor accident at eleven-forty precisely," she said. "He must have fallen asleep for a moment, for he drove full tilt into an oncoming tram, the car folded up like a concertina, and he was crushed against the steering-wheel."

"And his passenger?" I asked.

"There was no passenger," she replied. "He was returning alone from Ealing, where he had dropped his friend about ten minutes before."

"But the woman?" I persisted.

"There was no woman," she said. "Apparently I had been mistaken all along."

"No woman?" I repeated dully. Slowly full understanding of the enormity of her guilt began to dawn on me. "You don't deserve an atom of sympathy," I cried. "Why, you're nothing better than a common murderess."

"Yes?" she said quietly.

"If you came here this evening expecting me to console you . . ."

She cut me short. "I'm afraid you've misunderstood me," she said. "I never fixed on you this evening because I needed sympathy, but because I wanted to rid my system of this poisonous tale. You are a writer and should be able to use it as part of your literary pabulum. Of course, you must work on it in your own way, sublimate it and . . ."

"How do you know I'm a writer?" I broke in.

"It's not difficult to guess," she said. "But mainly because of your resemblance to Piers. You've got the same hands with long drooping fingers, the same hair . . ."

"Stop!" I cried. "I've heard enough. Get out of my flat before I lose my temper. . . ."

She smiled so provocatively that I caught hold of her and pulled her up from the chair. I felt her body relax in my arms; and at that moment an overwhelming longing came over me to lay violent hands on her, to beat her and make her suffer for her crime. But even as the idea crossed my mind, I saw from the fanatical brilliance of her eyes that she had already intercepted my thought and understood, even welcomed, my desire.

Nauseated by this new revelation, I flung her out of the flat like a limp bundle of washing. Finding a glove of hers on the hall floor, I threw that after her down the well of the staircase. Then I bolted the front door, returned to the sitting-room, opened the windows and sat down in a chair; but it was the chair she had been sitting in, so I jumped to my feet and strode over to the writing-desk. Ernst's letter was still unposted. I sat down and stared feverishly at the three-ha'penny stamp. Then I picked up a pen and pulled out a sheet of paper, and after a moment or two I began to write quite quickly: "The hall was thick with smoke. In the ring Sparks junior, the ref, was counting three, four, five, six. . . ."

PROGRAMME FOR TEACHING THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF FILM DIRECTION

(Continued)

By S. M. EISENSTEIN

(Translated by Stephen Garry, with Ivor Montagu)

SECOND COURSE

THIRD TERM

EXPRESSIVE MANIFESTATION

DIVISION I. THE PRACTICE OF EXPRESSIVE PORTRAYAL.

I. MISE-EN-SCENE RAISONNEE.

The practical transposition of the lines of the simpler scenario, expressive task or situation into a chain of dramatic events and action. Methods of collective discussional selection and invention.

1.—ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION. Social characteristics of the *dramatis personae* and the subject-emotional treatment. Establishment of the basic expressive key-points.

2.—ORGANISATION OF THE EVENT IN SPACE :

- a.—acquaintance with the technique of three-dimensional graphic notation ;
- b.—planning of static situation and light ;
- c.—expressive movement of one figure in a motionless situation.

3.—ORGANISATION OF THE EVENT IN SPACE AND TIME:

- a.—acquaintance with the technique of four-dimensional graphic ;
- b.—planning of dynamic surroundings, dynamic source of light ;
- c.—co-ordination of the expressive activity and the mutual re-distribution of a number of figures ;
- d.—planning of mass scenes.

4.—SPECIAL ORGANISATION OF THE EVENT IN SPACE:

- a.—planning for a circle (circus type) ;
- b.—for a surrounding (surroundings of a spectator) ;
- c.—for a proscenium ;
- d.—for a point (transition to conception of the frame).

5.—SPECIAL ORGANISATION OF THE EVENT IN TIME.

Forms for transition of the mise-en-scène into a primitive shot script.

6.—SPECIAL ORGANISATION OF THE EVENT IN SOUND.

The specific quality of radio play and radio production.

7.—The practical carrying out of analogous *mise-en-scène* tasks at home, resolved by groups of students.

The collective discussional group (not brigade) as a transitional stage from the full auditorium to the individual resolution of the task.

8.—INDIVIDUAL TASKS.

II. THEMES OF A GENERAL KIND REVEALED IN THE COURSE OF THE PRACTICAL WORK.

A.—ON THE LINE OF CREATION.

- 1.—The creative phenomenon in its real course. Its full picture, unique for any sphere of the creative order. Practical participation in such (collectively and individually).
- 2.—Theoretical excursus into the sphere of existing teachings and systems :
 - a.—Their one-sidedness, understood as a hypertrophy of individual phrases of the normally proceeding creative process;
 - b.—the social and historical explanation of this ;
 - c.—the error of mechanical division into “ internal ” and “ external ” technique. The error of mechanical synthesis. Genuine unity in an integral creative process. Its methodics.
 - d.—rational exploitation of the existing system in application to the defined phases of the creative process and its inculcation.

B.—ON THE LINE OF COMPOSITION.

- 1.—The conception of treatment.
- 2.—The law of co-subordination of the parts and the particularities to the unity of intention of the integral resolution.
- 3.—The method of translating verbal picture signification into a picture of action.
- 4.—The incompetency of formal logic and inadequacy of “ common sense ” (F. Engels) in the matter of deciding artistic tasks. Graphic examples. Analysis of typical errors. The dialectic quality of correct resolution.
- 5.—The translation of the basic, finished melodramatic resolution by means of re-treatment into a buffoonery-comic and tragic plan. The methodics of the translation, based on a brief excursus into the nature of the comic and the tragic (a similar study of these questions is the subject of the VIIth term).
- 6.—Organisation of the expressive manifestation in man. Gesture, facial acting, studied as a *mise-en-scène* concentrated in one man. *Mise-en-scène* as a facial expression manifestation, breaking into three-dimensional spatial manifestation.

- 7.—The same understanding, extended to intonation also. Transfer to the planning of dialogue and monologue spatially and intonationally.
- 8.—The gradual consequentiality of development and the compositional co-presence of individual elements of expressive portrayal.

DIVISION II. HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF EXPRESSIVE MANIFESTATION.

A.—Teaching on motive.

Motive as the stimulus to manifestation.

The answering reaction : complex and differentiated.

B.—Expressive manifestation as the struggle of motives. The tracing of this phenomenon from the struggle of several motives to the reaction in antagonisms to a single motive.

1.—The lower stage :

a.—expressive manifestation of vegetation : heliotropism and geotropism ;

b.—tropism of the lower animals and the specific quality of their reactions in distinction from those of vegetation. The reaction of the embryo.

2.—The stage of reflexes.

Continuation of the traditions of the preceding stages and the new qualitative acquisition of the given stage.

3.—Arbitrary movement.

Reaction in completeness of a wholly developed process of manifestation. The new qualitative specific quality of the given stage.

4.—Human social and psychological reaction.

The foregoing survey provides a short history of qualitative development of expressive manifestations, from the stage of the simplest reactions of the lower organisms to the fulness of the socially conscious reaction of man as a unit in society.

It is based on the material of a preceding special discipline of psychology and human conduct, and is a special supplement of these data to the specific sphere of expressive manifestation.

DIVISION III. THEORY OF EXPRESSIVE MANIFESTATION.

A.—Short history of the question of the laws of expressive man.

Critical analysis of the teaching on the expressive movement of man.

1. Plato. 2. Aristotle. 3. Lucian. 4. Quintillian. 5. Cicero. 6. Teleological " explanations " and " divine will." 7. Descartes, 1650. 8. Spinoza. 9. Lessing. 10. M. Engel, 1788. 11. Duchesne, 1867. 12. Gratiolet, 1865. 13. Darwin, 1872. 14. Bekhterev.

15. Jean d'Udine and Havelock Ellis. 16. James. 17. Ludwig Klages (forerunners : Piderit and Carus ; followers: Prinzhorn, Rudolf Bode, Kohnstamm and Krukenburg). 18. Cannon. 19. Freud. 20. Leashley. 21. Pavlov's teaching in supplement to the question of expressiveness.

NOTE.—The obviously erroneous theories, such as that of Del Sarto, his popularisers (Count Sergei Volkhonsky) and the epigones are studied only in the form of shades of contrast.

B.—The basic theoretic errors of a number of analysed teachings are profoundly socially conditioned, since the roots of these theories have a bourgeois origin and bear the corresponding imprints of one-sidedness and limitations. The essence of those errors and the positive contribution of each of them to the work of approximating to exhaustive (for the present time) theses on the given problem.

DIVISION IV. THE PROCESS OF EXPRESSIVE MANIFESTATION.

A.—The problem of expressiveness in the conditions and achievements of the present day. The general laws. Their historical prerequisites, their general theoretical and practical confirmations.

The gradual interconnection of various forms of expressive manifestation.

B.—Expressive manifestation as a revelation of itself to the outside, and expressive manifestation as a means of social mutual intercourse and influence.

C.—The rôle of imitation in expressive manifestation.

D.—Organicness as the basic condition of the influence of expressive manifestation. The organic laws of expressive manifestation. Philogenesis and its rôle. The social determinant of expressive manifestation.

E.—The conditions in which and by which expressive manifestation proceeds. The pathology of expressive manifestation. The reconstruction of expressive manifestation (its reproduction) as a transition to expressive production.

FOURTH TERM

GENERAL THESES

The third term was devoted to expressive manifestation from the aspect of producing it in the measure in which it is a single expression of man's general conduct.

The fourth term is devoted to study of expressive manifestation especially from the viewpoint of mutual intercourse, and also, as a special supplement to this, its method of manifesting itself in art.

In accordance with this, expressive manifestation is studied in its two varieties :

- 1.—Expressive manifestation, inseparable from the producer in the process of intercourse and mutual consumption (the actor's acting, the orator's speech, etc.).
- 2.—Expressive manifestation capable of existing separately from the producer in the form of so-called works, which can serve as objects of consumption independently (the "works" of painting, sculpture, literature, etc.).

The basic difference in the process of perception of these two varieties. This establishes the basic separation of the fourth term into two divisions :

- a.—on the personal form.
- b.—on the form of production.

EXPRESSIVE WORK

Teaching of expressive movement as an element in actor's acting.

DIVISION I. INTRODUCTORY PRACTICAL WORK.

The working out of tasks of the type of those given in the third term, carried to the next phase of their resolution, i.e., a detailed working out of the facial-expression gesticulatory aspect. It is made in the form of a production in exponential form by the film director teacher of a play fragment, with one or two qualified professional actors, and rehearsals in which the task is worked up in detail.

DIVISION II. THEORY AND PRACTICE OF ACTOR'S EXPRESSIVE MOVEMENT.

A.—Study of expressive movement.

- 1.—Simple utilitarian movement.
- 2.—Strictly expressive movement.

B.—Construction of expressive movement.

- 1.—Analysis of various schools and systems of actor's craft.
- 2.—Expressive manifestation of the actor and technique of actor's movement :
 - a.—the centre of the body and the periphery. Basic laws ;
 - b.—expressive movement of the body as a whole ;
 - c.—expressive movement of the body according to expressive regions ;
 - facial expression ;
 - expression of arms and hands ;
 - expression of speech ;
 - d.—co-ordination and composition of expressive manifestation in the conditions of artistic reproduction ;
 - e.—acting work by the students themselves on the scale of directorial demonstration, within the limits of the given play fragments, of the technique of expressive movement and intonation.

TEACHING CONCERNING THE IMAGE

DIVISION I. ON THE PERSONAL IMAGE.

A.—INTRODUCTORY PRACTICAL WORK.

- 1.—The process of building up the actor's image is carried out in the form of exponential demonstration by professional actors of fragments of complete rôles (with all the attributes of their stage or cinematic embodiment). Detailed exposition of the history of play production and the process of building up a concretely demonstrated image. Demonstration of subsidiary material or rebuilding of individual stages of rôle production.
- 2.—Spatial, motor, gesture, and intonational planning of dialogue and monologue in face of a worked-out image.
- 3.—Theoretical generalisation.

The creative act of building up the actor's image, as a particular form of general image creation. The creative specific quality. Production of the image-rôle. Analysis and criticism of existing theories.

B.—THE ACTOR'S IMAGE.

- 1.—The image as the unity of form and content of the represented personage.
- 2.—Social conditionality in the image.
- 3.—Type, image, mask, conventional "type."
- 4.—Practical work of independent building up of image for a set rôle. Analysis of the rôle and auxiliary material.
- 5.—Strict image creation (complete independent authorship of the image, created immediately from material of reality).

C.—PERFORMANCE OF THE ACTOR'S IMAGE.

- 1.—The process of performing a rôle as a repetition in a crystallised form of the process of staging a rôle.
- 2.—The labour process of the actor's acting. Psycho-physical state. Regime and training.
- 3.—Practical work of performance of the built-up image on the scale of directorial demonstration by the students themselves on the basis of the rôle set.

D.—WORK WITH THE ACTOR.

- 1.—Tact and tactics in work with the actor. Forms of co-operation between actor and director.
- 2.—Selection of actor, exposition of the play and the rôle. Specific form of exposition to the actor of the directorial plan and intentions.
Work with the actor on the rôle and at rehearsals.
- 3.—Method of demonstration and method of narration.
- 4.—Work with actors of other schools and tendencies. Work with children. Terminology of various schools and the specific

quality of the directorial approach in dependence on various systems.

- 5.—Practical work by students in the film director's faculty, together with actors attending the third course of the actor's faculty. Production of sketches by the united forces of the students of both faculties.

DIVISION II. ON THE IMAGE OF THE PRODUCTION.

- 1.—The artistic image, as formal consolidation of the content and image of the thought.

- a.—social conditioning ;

- b.—creative product as concretisation of the thought image in definite material ;

- c.—the creative process as the practice of its realisation.

- 2.—The image of the work as the unity of form and content :

- a.—form, as the logic of content, developed in sensuous thinking. Unity in the mutual penetration of both sides of the process of thinking in an integral work of art.

- b.—errors of the formalists, and the theory of setting aside.

- c.—the creative act of perception.

- 3.—IMAGERY AND REPRESENTATION :

- a.—their grade, connection, interaction, and organic co-presence in a finished composition ;

- b.—hypertrophy of representation : the so-called " Leningrad school " of cinematography, etc. ;

- c.—hypertrophy of imagery : the Mei Lan Fang theatre, etc. ;

- d.—connection of plastic imagery with " linear speech " (terminology of Academician Marr) ;

- e.—representation—image—cryptogram—symbol ;

- f.—study of the given problem according to different spheres.

- 4.—From the idea of the work to its external form. The actual process of staging the work.

- 5.—General law of expressive manifestation in application to image creation. The grade connection with the principles of expressive movement. New quality.

- 6.—Image creation, its social and psychological signification. Its social application.

Students who have finished the second course and have presented a report on their summer practical work are entitled to call themselves **QUALIFIED ASSISTANT DIRECTOR ON THE ARTISTIC SIDE.**

THIRD COURSE.

FIFTH TERM.

NOTE.—At the beginning of this course the student's acquaintance with the particular methods of editing and editing practice according

to samples of cinema films and a chrestomathy of cinema methods is presupposed.

DIVISION I. THE PRACTICAL WORK OF A CINEMA PRODUCTION.

Translation of a simple mise-en-scène into an orthodox shot script.

A.—GENERAL PREREQUISITES.

- 1.—From expressive man to an expressive cinematic work.
- 2.—The specific character of cinematography in contrast to the theatre. New elements, and the elements of theatrical and other arts in new quality.
- 3.—The gesticulatory-motor process, subject to editing.
- 4.—Editing (style) gathered inside the frame limits.
- 5.—General theses of image creation in its resolution with specifically cinematic resources.

B.—PRACTICAL WORK.

- 1.—Mise-en-scène and mise-en-shot.
Practical work of compositional filling of the frame limits (European compositional tradition): (a) in a project scheme, (b) with real objects.
- 2.—The editing keypoints and the editing compositional group.
- 3.—The editing elements within the compositional group.
Practical work in the cut-out of frame limits (Japanese compositional method): (a) in a project scheme, (b) with real objects.
- 4.—Spatial and temporal rhythm.
- 5.—The law of repetition of a single compositional scheme through all the expressive elements and resources, studied in cinematic elements.
- 6.—The conditionality of this scheme upon the treatment approach. The social conditionality of the treatment and composition.
- 7.—Practical work of editing composition of a complex scene, preliminarily resolved in mise-en-scène form. The full process of editing construction.

DIVISION II. SPECIAL ELEMENTS OF CINEMATIC WORK.

A.—GENERAL PREREQUISITES.

- 1.—From traditional cinematography to revolutionary cinematography. The cinematography of a single set-up (shooting point) and the cinematography of changing set-ups. The silent and sound cinema.
- 2.—The class viewpoint of a phenomenon and its realisation in cinema with the special resources of cinematography. Viewpoint. Treatment. Shooting point. Editing.

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- 3.—Elements of cinematography studied in their qualitative interconnection :
 - a.—title ;
 - b.—title-shot ;
 - c.—shot ;
 - d.—editing and its prerequisites : the basic cinematic phenomenon ; the shot as a process of editing combination of frames ; editing as a new quality on the lines of development of the nucleus of editing the single shot ; sound and its place in the general conception of film editing ;
 - e.—the importance of this understanding in establishing a single compositional law subject qualitatively to the various cinematic elements.

B.—SPECIAL DIVISION.

1.—GENERAL THESES ON PLASTIC COMPOSITION.

Analysis of the samples of pictorial composition.

This is studied in a special discipline of knowledge of art, and together with joint studies under the supervisors of studies in film direction and knowledge of art subjects.

2.—THE SHOT :

- a.—the primal margin of the frame ;
- b.—foreshortening and lighting ;
- c.—expressiveness of lenses, and speed of shooting ;
- d.—from margin to image ;
- e.—primitive shot image and symbol ;
- f.—practical work on the shot by the students of the faculty for film direction jointly with the students of the faculty for camera-men.

PHOTOGRAPHIC WORK. Static material (man, object, space, surroundings).

CINEMATOGRAPHIC WORK. Dynamic material (man, object, etc., in movement).

3.—EDITING.

FORMS OF EDITING ALONG THE LINES OF KINETICS.

- a.—metric ;
- b.—rhythmic ;
- c.—tonal (melodic) ;
- d.—overtonal ;
- e.—intellectual, as a new quality along the lines of overtonal development in the direction of significant overtones.

The qualitative dependence of the various forms of editing and their contrapuntal co-presence.

FORMS OF EDITING ALONG THE LINE OF SEMANTIC TYPE :

- a.—editing, parallel to the developing course of the event (primitively informational editing) ;
- b.—editing, parallel to the course of several actions (parallel editing) ;
- c.—editing, parallel to sensation (the editing of primitive comparison) ;
- d.—editing, parallel to sensation and significance (imaginal editing) ;
- e.—editing, parallel to the propositions (editing, a constructive conception).

The qualitative interconnection of various forms of editing and their contrapuntal co-presence.

4.—SOUND :

- a.—on latent sound ;
- b.—on independent sound ;
- c.—the representationalism of sound ;
- d.—sound in sound film ;
- e.—sound editing and its peculiarities ;
- f.—practical work with sound recordist on sound constructions in the conditions of sound-recording and microphone.

5.—COMPOSITION OF THE ELEMENTS OF CINEMATIC WORK :

- a.—the qualitative connection of theatre and cinema along the lines of combination of elements ;
- b.—sound-sight counterpoint (principles) ;
- c.—methods of sound-sight counterpoint and the varieties of combination.

DIVISION III. CONSTRUCTION OF CINEMATIC WORK.

A.—ON THE STRUCTURE OF THE WORK.

From expressive movement to the finished expressive work of dramaturgic form.

- 1.—Dramatic resolution.
- 2.—Consolidation of the dramatic resolution and the dramaturgic type or structure.
- 3.—Short historical excursus into the sphere of presentation of typical structures. Their social and psychological prerequisites. Typical situations.
- 4.—Brief survey of specific varieties of cinematic genres (in chrestomathic form).

B.—PRACTICAL WORK OF CONSTRUCTION OF THE CINEMA PRODUCT.

Collective creative stage by stage work on the building up of a complete cinema product (method, common to other "practical work").

- 1.—Ascertaining the theme.
- 2.—From theme to plot.
- 3.—From plot to scenario.
- 4.—From scenario to shot script.

Together with last-year students of the scenario faculty or professional scenarists.*

- 5.—Working out of images, and work with the actor.

(Together with last-year students of the actors' faculty, or professional actors.)

- 6.—Shooting.

- 7.—Editing.

(Together with last-year students of the camera-man faculty, or professional camera-men.)

Individual parts and stages of making the general cinematographic work are dealt with by individual students, the results serving as examination models.

NOTE.—The technique of shooting and editing is previously practised in special cycles of study.

C.—THE GENERAL PLAN :

- a.—the general plan—creative-compositional ;
- b.—the general plan—estimates-productional ;
- c.—form and technique of drawing up the general plan ;
- d.—practice in the form of transposition of the cinema product into a full general plan.

D.—CREATION, TECHNIQUE, DIRECTOR'S WORK IN CONCRETE PRODUCTION CONDITIONS :

- a.—hygiene and the rationalisation of creative labour. Norm of output. Creative economy. Collectivism in creation ; methods of exceeding the norm.
- b.—editing of the productional-operative programme.
- c.—creative preparation for filming. Sketches of the intention. Necessary flexibility of the intention. Its limits. Variations and variants.
- d.—creation in the period of realisation of the intention by successive stages.

* It is recommended that students of other faculties should be present at all stages of work, but at given stages their direct creative participation is provided for.

This section of the work is completed by a resumé estimate and characterisation of the creative process, and by the necessary indications to the transition to individual creative fulfilment.

Thus the students are led up to the work of the fourth course, which is spent in assimilating the chosen specialities, genres, and schools of the leading masters, according to which the students present their diploma work.

Those who have completed the third course and have presented a report on their corresponding practice in production are granted the title of QUALIFIED ASSISTANT DIRECTOR.

FOURTH COURSE.

SEVENTH AND EIGHTH TERMS.

The preceding sixth term is spent in teaching the future director all sides of, and the complete process of building up, a film in all its creative phases and throughout all its stages.

Although carried out on the basis of study of a distinct variety of cinematography, the story film, the work of this term at the same time provides a general typical idea of training to build up any kind of film.

This material should be presented as objectively as possible, and the problems met with should be covered to the maximum. It is very important to avoid narrowly genre and tendentious qualities (poly-genreism within the cinematic work is recommended).

The task of the seventh term is to acquaint the student with the cinematographic speciality he has chosen, and the genre sub-divisions and creative tendencies within them.

There are three such specialities :

- 1.—Director of story cinematography.
- 2.—Director of publicity (propaganda) or news film.
- 3.—Director of scientific-educational film.

The student chooses the division he desires to specialise in and attends the corresponding cycle of disciplines of a general character, within which is his chosen division.

But he makes his diploma project in accordance with the genre and tendency he has chosen, under the direction of the corresponding supervisor-film director.

DIRECTORIAL SPECIALISATION

A.—DIRECTOR OF STORY FILM

Obligatory subjects for all students of the given division.

- 1.—Construction of an emotional film :
 - a.—nature of the emotional phenomenon ;

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- b.—specific quality of emotional construction, arising out of social-historical prerequisites; study in various spheres of art;
 - c.—construction of an emotional work by cinematic means; general theses; analysis of models available; practical indications; practice;
 - d.—the revolutionary emotional film.
- 2.—Construction of a comic film :
- a.—nature of the comic; connection of serious and comic.
 - b.—specific quality of comic construction, arising out of social-historical prerequisites;
 - c.—construction of a comic work by cinematic means; general conceptions; analysis of models available; practical indications; practice;
 - d.—Soviet comedy;
- 3.—Short generalised study of other genres of story cinematography: adventure, psychological, detective, etc.

Diploma work is carried out in accordance with the chosen genre within the speciality, and under the direction of the corresponding supervisor of cinematography according to the student's choice. Every supervisor is in charge of a group of not more than six or seven students, who have made their choice, and he supervises the carrying out of the diploma work, and is responsible for the corresponding pass qualifications at the end of the course.

B.—DIRECTOR OF PUBLICITY (PROPAGANDA) AND NEWS FILM.

Acquaintance with the tendencies and genres of publicity (propaganda) and news film.

- a.—news film and cinema sketch;
- b.—technique and composition of cinema journal;
- c.—documentary;
- d.—travel editing and cinema train;
- e.—ethnographic and expedition films.

The system of rendering diploma work is as for the director of a story film.

C.—DIRECTOR OF SCIENTIFIC-EDUCATIONAL FILM.

Acquaintance with the genres and varieties of the given branch.

- a.—general educational discipline;
- b.—methodology of scientific work;
- c.—scientific film;
- d.—technical film;
- e.—primary teaching film;
- f.—military educational film;
- g.—children's film;
- h.—school-pedagogical film.

The system of rendering diploma work is as for directors of story and publicity (propaganda) films.

The work of the fourth course should be so organised as to ensure that the study of all special disciplines and all the preliminary work for the carrying out of diploma tasks are completed during the seventh term, with a view to ensuring that the eighth term is entirely devoted to realisation and defence of the diploma work.

FOR ALL SPECIALITIES DIPLOMA WORK CONSISTS IN MAKING A DETAILED AND EXHAUSTIVE PROJECT OF A CINEMA PRODUCTION IN THE CHOSEN GENRE AND SPECIALITY, PRESENTED IN THE FORM OF A COMPLETELY WORKED OUT GENERAL PLAN.

For a story film director the project of the general plan is composed of the following elements :

- 1.—GENERAL TREATMENT. Operating on a critique of the work as a whole on the basis of a Marxist analysis and estimate.
- 2.—DETAILED ANALYSIS AND CHARACTERISATION OF INDIVIDUAL IMAGES of the personages of the given work. Social and psychological characterisation, appearance, costume, make-up. Detailed description, sketches, elucidatory schemes, models of iconographic material, etc.
- 3.—SCENIC RESOLUTION. Detailed working out of the planning and setting of the scene and individual mise-en-scènes of the chief moments (graphic schemes and descriptions, signficatory and acting indications in the form of stage directions expounded in detail, description of the action for various elements of the dialogue, cues and movements of the *dramatis personae*).
- 4.—CINEMATIC RESOLUTION. Shot script, made on the basis of the acting mise-en-scène. The key moments of the shooting script, represented by consequential schemes of individual shots (consequential graphic representation of the composition of the changing editing pieces).
- 5.—WORK WITH THE ACTOR. In addition to written notes, in his *viva voce* report to the qualifications commission the applicant for a diploma gives an interpretation of rôles, adequate in its dimension and form to explain to the actor his image and its details.

The applicant must give a practical demonstration of the movement, gesture, intonation, and general conduct in application to the worked out images within the scope and method of directorial demonstration.

- 6.—CINEMATOGRAPHIC SHOOTING AND EDITING. Part of the projected task is carried out practically in the form of shooting and editing of individual fragments of the projected film.

7.—ECONOMIC CO-OPERATIVE PLAN OF PRODUCTION.

In addition to the above specified elements of an artistic and creative nature, the diploma work must also include an economic, calendar, and operative schedule (schedule, dope-sheets, and estimates).

NOTE.—Acquaintance with this branch is made by study of a special cycle, parallel to the main subject.

The presentation and defence of the diploma work confers the right to the title of QUALIFIED CO-DIRECTOR.

After presenting and defending his diploma project the student passing out of the Institute is obliged to make one complete production in a cinema factory in the capacity of assistant-practician or co-director.

After he has done this production practice and made a detailed report on the same, the student who has passed receives a diploma and the title of QUALIFIED DIRECTOR.

ERRATUM

Footnote to p. 148 of the last issue (Vol. 15, No 6) should read :

Adopted as the basis for the course in Film Direction at the Supreme State Institute of Cinematography (V G.I.K.). (In a teaching institute of the type of a Higher Educational Institution the course covers four years ; in an institute of university type it is reckoned to cover two and a half years)

CHINA AND THE CINEMA

By WINIFRED HOLMES

“**A**T dinner her cousin’s wife suddenly suggested that Huan Hsiao-chieh go with her to the cinema. A new film was showing, called *The Tragedy of Ma Chen-hua*. . . . The young wife described the story in vivid synopsis . . . tragedies of Ma Chen-hua’s kind happen every day; there is nothing unusual about it . . . but in real life the girl never commits suicide.

They met several acquaintances at the cinema. . . .”

This quotation from a modern Chinese short story may surprise those of us who do not realise the tremendous changes in Chinese city life since the beginning of the century. Cinema-going is as regular a habit of the well-to-do as it is here, and cosmopolitan Shanghai’s four big cinemas are always more full of Chinese people than of Europeans. In the purely Chinese cities of Nanking and Peking and Canton the cinema is equally popular, but it is not the ubiquitous feature of country-district life that it is in Japan. There, every peasant and factory-worker goes once or twice a week to the local picture-house for a handful of yen.

But in China it cannot be called a national habit as millions of peasants of the interior are not only illiterate but live at starvation level, and could not afford even the cheapest of rates. Moreover, outside the cities there is little electrical power and less provincial capital available to install expensive plant or apparatus. Last year’s statistics showed that the 276 cinemas of the whole of China and Manchuria were all situated in 58 towns; only 157 were sound-equipped.

The *People’s Tribune* makes some shrewd remarks on the subject: “Considerations of law and order largely affect this matter. Before investing their money in constructing and equipping a cinema, people want to be assured of a return on their outlay, and feel reasonably sure that it will not be raided by bandits, or their profits cut to nothing by the imposition of an arbitrary tax. . . . There are many areas in which they cannot have this assurance.”

The thought of bandits raiding a country cinema is, to say the least, piquant. That an arbitrary tax may be suddenly imposed on the speculator also rings strangely to us. China is far from being a unified country, and local panjandruns and war-lords have absolute feudal powers which they exert in a modern context.

This unique fact of the very old and the very new existing side by side without any signs of intermediate progress is something difficult for us to understand. But it must be grasped before making any generalisations about contemporary China.

As one of her writers says: "China can no more use side-wheel steamers in art than in life. We have to leap right ahead to the thing that has greatest value and meaning in the world scene to-day."

The cinema enters largely into the new mode of living. But when the first American silent films entered China they caused a moral and social upheaval. By showing entertainment-prince standards of life, ideals and manners, which we might know to be false, a foreign people just awakening from a Rip Van Winkle sleep of centuries could not help being affected adversely thereby; taking them to be valid and exciting pictures of the new mode of living. Urban Chinese began to ape Western screen ways and the change was too violent to be anything but generally harmful.

But soon natural good taste and the warnings of far-sighted people showed up the shoddiness of screen civilisation. Now Western films have lost most of their popularity. In this rejection of Western films the bubbling sense of humour of the Chinese and their sensitive feeling for aesthetics have played chief parts. Enjoying the slapstick comedy of Charlie and Harold Lloyd, and later Mickey, they could not bear the mouthing white women. They were so *funny* with their huge rolling eyes, big tooth-paste smiles, awkward movements and gawky bodies! Whatever could be said to be beautiful or attractive about them! Now China has produced her own glamorous stars—Miss Butterfly Wu and Miss Yen-yen Chen, for instance—whose faces are nationally admired and whose movements express womanly charm and modesty.

Since 1910 the Chinese have made their own films, and infinitely prefer them to all others. They have an appreciative and fairly wide outside market for them also in the Philippines, Siam, French Indo-China, and the Malay States. There is far more depth, reality and social purpose in their films than in those of the Japanese, and unlike the latter they do not ape Hollywood. In fact, Chinese producers are almost alone in the world in having a sense of social responsibility, unallied to actual political propaganda. Their films largely touch on the problems of modern China, and these themes are worked out seriously and with psychological truth and integrity.

The story of *Humanity*, a highly popular and successful film of a few years ago, will prove this point. Another popular film told the story of a girl of good family who left her comfortable country home against the wishes and warnings of her parents to plunge into city life—to her gradual deterioration and tragic gutter-end. *The Fisherman's Song*, a Volga-boatman-like epic of the passions and struggle for existence of China's river-folk, swept Russia last year and was a brave and memorable film. *Tien-lun* (Family Relations) traced the changes in condition and the developments of a family of four generations. There was some talk of releasing it in America. The film is of good quality, and has a universal appeal; it might easily become an international winner.

Mr. S. I. Hsiung, author of *Lady Precious Stream*, is interesting himself in a scheme to make Chinese films in England with Chinese technicians and actors. It will be a privilege for us to be able to come to terms in even a small way with contemporary China. Though hampered by lack of money and the technical adjuncts to film-making that are open to American and English producers, the genius of China for all forms of art, including acting, make her films remarkably satisfying. China is never absorbed; if she absorbs, she gives out again something highly individual and national. Except for "shimpageki," medieval sword-fighting films, Japanese products are pale reflections of American models. Not so the Chinese. They are absolutely Chinese in spirit and action, although the story may be of contemporary life and the clash of Western customs with Eastern ideas.

But China followed Japan in one respect. Her earliest efforts at film-making were adaptations of "cloak-and-sword" classical plays. Both *The Western Chamber* (Ming, fourteenth century) and *The Red Chamber* (seventeenth century) were screened. But the intellectuals were keen to express new ideas and the Central Government disapproved almost as much of reaction as it did of Left Wing theory. It imposed a strict censorship, forbidding traditional subjects as well as communist ones. All scenarios have to be approved by Nanking before a shot is taken; the finished film is examined as well.

This strictness has hampered the free creative impulse of contemporary China, and it is tragic to hear of all the young, eager Left Wing writers who were executed or disappeared during the Kuomintang *coup-d'état* in 1927; and of the forty executed and more than a hundred kidnapped or imprisoned in the second drive against "dangerous thoughts" in 1930 and 1931.

The great Chinese Renaissance which grew up between 1917 and 1927, and which was chiefly literary, also affected stage and screen. It was socialist and even communist in essence. The old tradition of "wen-yen" was seen to be merely dead formalism and could only appeal to a few people of the aristocracy. Writers began to write in the ordinary language of the people. This new literature, "pai-hua," became extremely popular among the young educated classes, although it could not reach the peasants as they only spoke in their own particular dialect. But it was a beginning, a step towards universality and a democratic literature. Foreign classics were translated feverishly into this common tongue: chiefly Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Flaubert, and de Maupassant.

Individuals were struggling hard to break through the bonds of ancient family and social custom which tied them in every direction. Love between men and women were freely discussed. Communist theory was looked upon as a new vision, almost a new religion. These ideas and painful struggles are reflected in the literature, drama and

films of the period, but they are difficult to unearth as they are banned by Chiang Kai-chek.

"Modern drama," writes Miss Nym Wales, "had a phenomenal rise for a few years, but has now been greatly handicapped by censorship and terrorist practices. T'ien Han and several other Left Wing dramatists, wrote some intensely interesting scenarios, a few of which were screened, but the drastic action taken against 'dangerous thoughts' by the authorities has temporarily succeeded in destroying the originality of the new Chinese theatre."

Nanking is highly autocratic in every respect. For instance, it rules that all films produced must be in the standard language of Mandarin. This rule is religiously kept in Shanghai, the chief centre of the film industry, but in the South producers sometimes disregard the law and write their captions in Cantonese dialect. Their films are still chiefly silent.

Indecency, opium smoking, bad family relations, tendentious attitudes towards the State, Chinese people shown in an unfavourable light—these are all taboo to the Nanking censor. Many American films rouse the Government to anger and sometimes to arbitrary action. The reason is that the villain in an American thriller is often Chinese. They are outraged by the Charlie Chan films, and protest that tong wars are unknown in China, being a purely American gangster conception, and that Chinese do not revenge themselves upon their enemies by the use of poison.

SHAKESPEARE ON THE SCREEN

By ROBERT HERRING

IN the cinema, Shakespeare, like colour, is something of which we periodically hear as being "round the corner." A firm makes *Becky Sharp* in colour. At once, we are told that half the season's forthcoming productions will be in colour. A firm does ("does it proud," they may think) *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; immediately, plans are announced for eighteen separate but simultaneous *Twelfth Nights*. These plans become vaguer as the returns from Shakespeare become smaller. *Becky Sharp* did not produce a flood of feature-films in colour; in eighteen months it has had three successors: *Trail of the Lonesome Pine*, *Garden of Allah*, and *Ramona*, which last ran less than a month at the Tivoli. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* has been followed only by *Romeo and Juliet* and *As You Like It*. Shakespeare is being kept round the corner—and there, some may be inclined to think, he had better stay; if the results of his works being screened are as has been seen.

Such a jibe, however, is too rude to be true. Neither *Romeo and Juliet* nor *As You Like It* were worse—that is to say, more insensitive—than many stage productions. The cinema, attempting Shakespeare after ten years of talkies, cannot be blamed for reaching no more than the average level of the theatre, which has had three centuries. The fact remains that even the harlotry cinema provided, this autumn, two adjacent houses in the same street showing Shakespeare. If that is going to happen—and also, if more is not going to happen—it is our duty as filmgoers to look into the whole question of Shakespeare on the screen; to discover in ourselves what we get, and what we expect to find.

It must be remembered that by no means all who go to see Shakespeare on the screen are filmgoers. The "novelty" of the films attempting to produce plays that have been the stand-by of repertory companies, as well as the legacies of dramatic literature, draws to the cinemas many who find the medium of film unfamiliar, if not confusing. Retired actresses, clerics and minor lecturers will be relieved to find that, on the whole, Shakespeare on the screen is as recognisable as in the theatre, library or classroom. This relief will cause them to express great enthusiasm. Other actresses, clerics and lecturers will deliver themselves of an opposing opinion. We must be prepared for a great deal of the criticism of films of Shakespeare to be made by people not at home with films. We must also be prepared for a body of indiscriminate enthusiasm from people so used to the mediocrity of most movies that they hail anything a little out of the rut as a masterpiece, without regarding that that rut maybe is deeper in cinema than in other entertainments.

Thus it happened with *Romeo and Juliet*. Relief at what had not been done allowed many to persuade themselves that more had been achieved than was even attempted. After this, after the "very good, considering," there came the wave of reaction: "lacking in all sense of poetry or drama, let alone tragedy." The truth, as so often, lay between these opinions. The truth, as nearly always, turns out to be an answer different from the one we think we are seeking. The question is: Can Shakespeare be filmed? The first reply is to ask: How has he been filmed?

Never as badly as might be feared. That, I think, must be the answer, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* only proves the rule. Even the Fairbanks-Pickford *Taming of the Shrew* was not, all things considered, as distressing as might have been expected from Hollywood's first Shakespeare talkie. It showed "faithfulness" to the text; that has since become an axiom, but our experience of Hollywood made us fear the text would be transatlantically "improved." It was not. It was unfortunate that the Garrick version was used; unfortunate that scenes were cut, and that Douglas Fairbanks, in his anxiety not to utter one word that was not Shakespeare's, was driven to eking out his business with tedious guffaws. Mary Pickford was miscast as the shrew—but let it be remembered that she applied herself conscientiously to the part, and did not try to make it provide a display of personality, as has the screen Rosalind. The talkie *Shrew* was dull because the play is, on the whole, dull. It is empty and the screen showed up that emptiness.

It showed up also something which has been evident in subsequent Shakespearean films; how much can we be asked to look at, while we listen? I discount all the trickery of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, my opinion of that film being that "the opportunities of the cinema have been so misused as to make the play clumsier, more drawn-out, and more boring than on the stage." * But the other films present us with an elaboration of setting beyond reach of the stage, beyond the expectation of Shakespeare. On the stage, considerations of scene-shifting rarely make it possible for more than two large sets to be used consecutively. We thus have curtains to represent "another part of the palace"; it may be true that this is because the Banqueting Hall has to be prepared behind. But the fact remains that our eye is rested. We are not presented with so literal a palace that we have that to take in as well as the play. The screen has no such limitations. Where blue light and suggested turrets are all we need from the stage to "see" Elsinore, the camera would probably give us a row of battlements as long as the Great Wall of China, with a view from them of all Denmark. We would switch to "a room in the castle" as solid as rock and bigger than the sites of Corfe, Harlech, and Bodiam combined. A stool and candelabra are not enough for Gertrude's room. Was she not queen? She must have

* *Life and Letters To-Day*, Vol. XIII, No. 2.

queenly appurtenances. So our eye is offered, and our eye must take in, embroidered curtains, coats-of-arms, heavy furnishings. For scene after scene this would go on, in the film. How much *Romeo and Juliet* offered us to look at in the Capulet's garden! Were those trees, shrubs, pots, essential? The makers thought they were—to the atmosphere of the period. They forgot our enjoyment of the piece. Did we not begin wondering about those plants—who tended them, if the Capulets received the gardener as they did the cooks: did we not begin thinking about a gardener, and thus have in our minds a character not in the play?

I think that, on the whole, Cukor's film avoided many of the pitfalls of sumptuous staging. It was, at first, a shock to be offered the whole of a city square for the first brawl to take place in. The Capulet house seemed surprisingly large. But, one reflected that the Capulets were rich; their house would be sumptuous—more sumptuous than the stage could present. The film was not being "typically movie" here: it was merely doing something we had forgotten might be done. But in details of decoration it overstepped. Just as dramatic dialogue does not consist of every word that would actually be said by the characters, so dramatic decoration does not consist of having every chair that would normally be in the room of, say, Juliet. One chair—to suggest chairs. And tables. Not the whole, literal lot.

In *As You Like It* I found the stairs in the scene of the wrestling surprised by their solidity. Of course, *As You Like It* was made in an odd manner. Here was a play set in woods, in summer. It was filmed within doors in winter. There is, no doubt, a case to be made for stylisation, and the artificial wood and carpety fruit-barrow grass no doubt went well with the Ainley-Quartermaine school of acting. The film *could* have done what the stage cannot—given us this play in natural settings, played naturally, by people who were at home in the open-air, in clothes that seemed to have seen it. (Orlando's shirt in this film never lost the laundry-crease in the sleeves.) Czinner and Bergner did not attempt that, and no doubt even if it makes one expect Rosalind to "tap" as well as turn somersaults, there is a case for presenting *As You Like It* in the pantomime tradition of *Babes in the Wood*. The Old Vic recently presented the play as a Watteau pastoral, and there the case is that the setting made Edith Evans' eighteenth century-ness less evident than it might otherwise have been.

But having decided to produce *As You Like It* as he did, Czinner fell down on one thing: he forgot that everyone who reads the play imagines, however vaguely, something of the settings. You read "a palace" or "another part of the wood." You don't stop to visualise very clearly; your mind's eye puts some kind of a tree on the right, there's a bush of some kind on the left. The palace window is high up at the back. It's there, you don't have to see it or count the panes. Every producer of the

plays has this pre-conception to face; every set he uses is replacing another in our imagination. It follows that the most successful is either the least definite or the most definite. *Romeo and Juliet* was so definite, it compelled us at times to leave our own ideas in abeyance and say: "After all, why shouldn't the house be like that?" The staircase, I found, in the *As You Like It* wrestling was intrusive without being definite. I felt it hadn't been there before, and I didn't see why it should be now.

But if I labour this point of settings, it is not that I think Shakespeare should be filmed before curtains. Heaven forbid! The dreariness of many stage productions is one of the reasons why it can still be said "Shakespeare spells ruin at the box-office." One wants light, warmth, colour—not poverty—in the staging. But these must reflect the play, not outdo it.

We need hardly, I imagine, enlarge on the commonplace that Shakespeare wrote for a theatre without scenery, with no artificial means of simulating night or day. All had to be done by words. To represent what he describes is, it follows, unnecessary. Moreover, if we are *seeing* we begin to wonder why we should listen to what is taking place before our eyes. This, and all that goes with it, is offset by the fact that there is much implicit in Shakespeare which should be shown. I think the plague scene and Juliet's funeral procession in *Romeo and Juliet* are to be approved. One can imagine much in *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *Julius Caesar* that would take on the vigour it should have were we to see it.

It must be remembered that the Elizabethans could *see* by hearing. We have lost that. We need the camera to show us Verona, to circle down, establish first the town, then the square, then the participants. We have *seen* what an Elizabethan *imagined* by hearing the words. If it be argued that this is fanciful, I reply that the plays were otherwise unactable propositions. If he did not get the sense of the storm from the words, *The Tempest* lost much of its point; if some of that storm were shown to us, it would regain much of it. But we cannot have sight *and* sound. We cannot have allusion to a place followed by brief "shot" of that place, or reference to larks accompanied by twitterings from a prop-boy. The balance must be kept, and that question I must for the moment leave on one side in order to relate it to another.

In addition to the matter of place in Shakespeare's plays, of action that should or should not be shown, there are the matters of time, and of space. The former need scarcely be examined; it should be evident that the screen has advantage over the stage in the matter of both simultaneous action, and of the passage of time in such a play as *The Winter's Tale*. Space is different and more difficult. I should explain that I mean the space between characters; also, indeed, between parts of their own development. The "space" between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth at

different times in the play is, for instance, something whose suggestion I have never seen the theatre attempt. Film, with camera-angle, length of shot, close-up, etc., can, without the spectator noticing it, leave in his mind an impression, a fulness of expression not previously met. The growth of Othello's rage, again, waits to be shown—not "the world gone awry" with crazy angles and crooked scenery, but the world falling away, leaving Othello alone, with one thing filling his mind, which is the screen.

I have never read *King Lear* without feeling Lear increase in stature in each act. I have never seen the play without feeling a discrepancy between that feeling and the actor's static size. A well-planned camera treatment, quite apart from what it would do for the scene at Dover, would overwhelm us with a growing Lear. It is no use saying this is a trick; it is the use of the medium, as grease-paint, timing, lighting, properties, are parts of the medium of the stage.

It is some use saying that the words make this unnecessary. But the words of *Romeo and Juliet* did not make that picture move us deeply. It was not the least of the film's surprises that it made the tragedy so tame. One cannot blame the actors (except Leslie Howard and John Barrymore). Other actors on the stage have done no more with it. *Romeo and Juliet* was a sad play, not a soaring tragedy. And I suggest that that will always happen if the plays of Shakespeare are filmed "faithfully," as they were written, for the stage.

The stage Shakespeare worked for, worked in words. The studio to-day uses words, along with much else, including actors, but also including cameras, and a method of assembling the finished performances quite different from that of the stage.

We may be relieved that the film-makers are "faithful" to the text. We may be glad that they take comparatively few liberties. But after I have seen three films, which fall into the categories of a post-war revue, an Edwardian Tree production, and a Victorian pantomime, I suggest that we shall never have a Shakespeare on the screen that means anything unless more liberties are taken.

There is much more than the question of repetition, of showing what is also said. If one replies, "Very well, substitute pictures for dialogue," one is faced with the fact that cutting of speeches upsets the play's balance. To realise that, you have only to look at what happened to Touchstone in Bergner's film. Scenes and speeches were put in these plays for effect—for stage effect. I do not see how we shall ever find the screen's equivalent for that until we give up trying to reproduce them in stage manner. And it is not going to get us any further, to "give" to Shakespeare all the "advantages" of cinema he never knew. Even if some director, worthy of the task, were to reconstruct the plays for film—were to take them down, select, rebuild—*only in a way that would give on film their film-equivalent*—what would we have? A film-interpretation

of Shakespeare. That might be better than a filmed stage-interpretation, which amounts to larger woods and better palaces. But it would not be Shakespeare on the screen. It would be his plays remoulded.

That is the truth we reach—that we can have faithful screen-stagings (with more imagination than hitherto) or we can have remouldings for film. And that last is not the final truth. It is midway. Beyond it lies the fact. Shakespeare might not have used the screen that way. We consider how he used the existing theatre, how he altered blank verse; we may then wonder whether he would have been content to use the studios just as they are. We may well make an *As You Like It* nearer to the spirit of the original than did Bergner. We may make one which, by some miracle, gives us all we have ourselves found in the play, whether read or acted. But we cannot answer the criticism: *It isn't Shakespeare!* Nothing is—on the screen. Nothing can be. Czinner and Cukor may turn film into plays; our imaginary director may turn the plays into films. We may transpose, as I believe Lye has done, and use visual imagery where he used words. That may be something. To many, the *Romeo and Juliet* talkie is something. But no film, I suggest, can give Shakespeare on the screen as much as did his stage give the plays he wrote for it. The essence must be lost in transference, and however many “beauties” we may reveal, we cannot be sure they are the ones intended. If we are troubled by the fact that films so far are enlarged stage-productions and no more, are we not as much troubled by the alternative—of reassembling, when we know we cannot recreate what might not, for the film, have been created in the form in which we have it?

ABSTRACTION AND ANARCHY

By HUGH GORDON PORTEUS

I

A PASSION for *abstractions* is perhaps the most distinguishing characteristic of Western man to-day. Abstract thought, which achieves its final flower in modern physics and higher mathematics, is a Western invention—for the Indians were, of course, pure "Aryans." And abstract thought, far more than "art," even than "abstract" art, can be regarded as an escapist activity, as a funk-hole from "Life." For although all intellectual activities are, in a sense, simply games, or literally "pastimes," nevertheless, the arts have always contrived to get over into their substance as much of the rich stuff of life as possible. The pattern of life, which the Buddhist affects to be able to trace in precise detail, is something to which all artists are sensitive, and any considerable work of art reflects, in symbol, the cosmic reality.

Mr. Herbert Read remarks in his latest book that "Buddhism, which conceives nature as animated by an immanent force . . . the one order to which the whole universe conforms, must inevitably affect the whole basis of art, in so far as art is a representation of reality or of the super-reality behind natural appearances."

Later on in the same book, Mr. Read very perspicaciously says of the "abstract" artist to-day "that the forms he creates are of more than decorative significance in that they repeat in their appropriate materials and on their appropriate scale certain proportions and rhythms which are inherent in the structure of the universe, and which govern organic growth, including the growth of the human body. Attuned to these rhythms and proportions, the abstract artist can create microcosms which reflect the macrocosm—he can hold the world, if not in a grain of sand, then in a block of stone or a pattern of colours." This is, I think, a very good definition of a work of art, and in itself sufficiently answers those who, like Mr. Auden, are inclined to belittle the abstract arts on account of their lack of "news"—news, i.e., of personalities and other downright subject-matter. A Bach fugue, or a sketch by Héliou, or a piece of Chinese calligraphy, are constructions primed with the most lively and urgent "news" about life, its rhythms, balances, disciplines and excesses.

Our terminology in art is inadequate, confusing and in every way unfortunate, however; and in speaking of "abstract" art we must remember that there are many degrees and orders of "abstraction." I fear we must pause at this point to clarify the matter; for one purpose of this note is to question rather severely our abstract habits of thought, and a smaller incidental purpose is to defend certain kinds of "abstract" contemporary art. An art, or a game, can be made out of almost anything. The more rules you make for your game, the more limitations of any kind that are imposed, either directly by the nature of the medium or more arbitrarily by cultural tradition or temporary fashion, the closer will an art approximate to the condition of a game—to a manipulation, as in chess, of the skill and chance elements. If you make an art without rules at all—if you try to communicate the visual image directly—then you defeat your purpose. The most satisfactory art-forms preserve a nice balance between "by-laws" and "vision." They allow a little to chance, a little more to skill, a little more still to the habit-system of the spectator—the traditional language—but as much as possible to the artist, as a kind of spirit medium between you and the universe. The examples of "abstract" art I have suggested, viz.: a Bach fugue, a sketch by Héliou, a bit of writing by Su Shih—would all conform to the requirements of such an ideal. A further tightening of "the rules of the game," however, might be a restriction which would kill the vital spark, and precipitate the work into the category of chess or mathematics. Some abstract painters to-day, certainly, are not exempt from this criticism. The distinction I wish to draw is between activity ("art worth the name") that involves all the proper faculties of

man—intellectual, sensuous, etc., in one *complex*—and, on the other hand, activity that deliberately short-circuits all the senses and relies on the pure will, allied to the counting instincts. And I suggest that to-day it is the second type of activity—the *abstracted* intellectual game—that has gained the ascendancy on us, perhaps to the peril of our human destiny.

Let me give an example. Mr. Hogben's *Mathematics for the Million* is a very ingenious and lively book that has been universally praised by reviewers, and is now a best-seller. Now Mr. Hogben is really your perfect "abstract" mind. "The first men who dwelt in cities," Mr. Hogben says, "were *talking* animals; the man of the machine age is a *calculating* animal." This is delivered with an air of pride: we have "progressed," you see, from mere clumsy chattering (from the bandying to and fro of gossip about ourselves, in vague and emotionally-coloured noises) to precise quantitative information about things. But I mention Mr. Hogben's book simply because it affords a good example of the way in which the "calculating animal" is worshipped to-day. What I wish to draw attention to is the probable consequences of the triumph of abstract thought when it takes our lives in hand. With a monotonous regularity, the machine wins every round.

D. H. Lawrence has been the champion of its opposite: an in some ways unfortunate advocate for those who, while recognising the dangers of over-intellectualisation, do not necessarily wish to be led into the Turkish bath of emotionalism or the boudoir of super-sex.

There is a horrid law of Nature whose workings have not, I think, been investigated as they deserve. It is the law of action and reaction; and it ensures that one extreme shall always meet its Nemesis in its antithesis.

The "intellectual" like Lawrence may violently react, and worship pure sensationalism, just as the cloistered monk breaks out one night to play the rake, or as the rake Tolstoy attached himself to a tardy fanatical asceticism.

These reactions may occur in time, in movements of art or politics no less than in the individual, in the inevitable historical process, or they may co-exist in the same individual or society. So long as we refuse to recognise their presence, we are their victims.

The passion for abstraction that is so notable a feature of our intellectual life to-day has been increased by the awe with which we greet the spectacular advances of applied science. And it helps to explain the ease with which the new political wave has swept over us all. The abstract mind, unfortunately, falls an easy victim to such seductions from the world of fact. And there is no sadder spectacle than that afforded by Mr. Herbert Read lately, caught in the toils of politics and sensationalism.

II

Mr. Read is not perhaps a true example of the unalloyed abstract mind. But if you compare his activities with those of Mr. Wyndham Lewis, or even of his friend, Mr. T. S. Eliot, you will see how he stands. Lewis is always the whole man—his prose, verse, or painting is all richly suffused with a complex thought and feeling. With Mr. Read you find a tendency to divorce thought from feeling. There are the serious, purely intellectual rationalisations of this and that, very abstract and theoretical, in prose as cool and tidy as his favourite Plato's. And then there are his pets, the quaint things done by the kiddies, the dagoes, and other nice, simple artists. For Mr. Read, I am certain, art is a reaction from the day's hard work. Mr. Read, I imagine, closes his mind with a snap before playing with his art-toys, in the jolly green grotto of his imagination. There is a very serious dichotomy here, between the mental and the emotional, that is best revealed in Mr. Read's book on Surrealism. Why does Mr. Read write about Surrealism in straightforward prose? Why do so many Surrealist painters studiously avoid anything in the nature of *form*? If Surrealism truly resolved the dichotomy, there would be no need for the movement; for that is what a good artist always does. Observe Mr. Read's coy attempt to escape in a footnote on p. 23. Whatever prose Mr. Read writes is, nevertheless, patently an almost pure product of reasoning; whereas his tastes in painting and

verse are hardly tempered by reason at all: they simply represent his romantic reaction from reason.

How is it that Mr. Read, and many less distinguished people to-day, have taken more than a decade to come to a realisation of the significance of (1) socialist theory, and (2) Surrealism? (Mr. Lewis's *Art of Being Ruled* appeared in 1927; his examination of Surrealism a year or two later.) I think the reason may be that Mr. Read—but, indeed, most of us to-day—can think only after we have felt. An exceptional man like Lewis feels and thinks in a single act. Mr. Read, it may be, has to wait for the pin of actual events to press into his leg before the elaborate machinery of his calculating mind moves into action. There it is, anyway. Mr. Read is not a Marxist critic, but in his recent work he has gone out of his way a good deal in order to insert a free advertisement here and there for Communism, or to put in something to keep the clenched fist out of his direction. But Mr. Read is too reasonable a man, and too sensitive an artist, to be anything but a pacific anarchist for long. And anarchy, of one sort or another, is the only possible political attitude that any conscientious person can (at the time of writing) sensibly adopt.

III

There is no room here to review them as they deserve, but I wish to commend two new books on art. Mr. Read's *Art and Society*,* from which I have already quoted, is, I think quite the best of his art criticism. His *Meaning of Art* and *Art To-day* are already indispensable classics, but this is in every way an advance on those volumes.

The second book is Mr. Johnstone's *Creative Art in England*†. Mr. Johnstone is an "abstract" painter and art master: he knows his stuff. As a critic he is almost the complement of Mr. Read. His writing is, to my mind, confused and stiff: it does not matter. Mr. Johnstone is not an "abstract" mind. He speaks with passion about things he likes and dislikes. He is an "original." In this book he does achieve his main object: to give some idea of the neglected wealth of art in England, from the earliest times. Significantly, he is at his best on Blake, with whom he has considerable affinity. He is intensely individualistic, full of enthusiasm, quite devoid of any donnish or pedantic preoccupations, very right and very wrong. On Blake he writes as only an artist could write. On Constable he writes as only a painter could write. On education he writes as only a practising teacher could write. His book is not for aesthetes or for many kinds of highbrow, but for artists, especially for painters, for teachers, for public libraries and the general public. Experts will dislike it for its dogmatic rightness and wrongness, for its gaps, for its shallow treatment of contemporary art. But everyone else should enjoy it and find it both entertaining and instructive. Mr. Johnstone is a character, a person, and he has made a personal anthology, which supplements and shames the anthologies we know. Mr. Johnstone is also, I fear, the wrong kind of anarchist. He scorns all the contemporary rackets, which is admirable and deplorable. I should call this book valuable and salutary, without being satisfactory. Mr. Read's book is valuable on another plane; and it is very nearly satisfactory. Mr. Read, however, is a practised hand. Mr. Johnstone's book is his first. At some future date it will be necessary to criticise both books in detail. Meanwhile, they should be read by anyone still interested in art.

*ART AND SOCIETY. By HERBERT READ. Heinemann. 10s.

†CREATIVE ART IN ENGLAND. By WILLIAM JOHNSTONE. Stanley Nott. 21s.

THEATRE AND DRAMA IN WALES

By STEFAN HOCK

WHEN a student at the University of Vienna, I at one time or another passed with a shy respect the door of a lecture-room in which one of our professors used to teach Cymric to an auditorium consisting of two students at most. I never dreamed then that there would come a day when I should be initiated into the mysteries of this seemingly esoteric language.

It was at Christmastide, 1932, when, after a short correspondence, I received in Vienna a visit from Lord Howard de Walden, who asked me if I would like to produce Hofmannsthal's *Everyman* in Welsh for the Eisteddfod at Wrexham. To be honest, I had never before heard the name of this town, and I did not quite know what Eisteddfod meant, but I accepted the offer, attracted by the prospect of revisiting England, where I had stayed a few months of the same year, busy with the preparation and, afterwards, with the supervision of the *Miracle* at the Lyceum Theatre, London. A booklet, "Welsh Made Easy," and the translation of *Everyman* into Welsh by Professor Gwynn Jones of Aberystwyth were sent to me in Vienna, and a few weeks later I began my rehearsals at Wrexham.

I find no words to describe the amazement I felt when I first saw the work of these Welsh amateur players. I have seen professional actors of many nations, and I have worked with many, but I do not consider any of them superior to these Welsh teachers and clerks, shopkeepers and assistants, navvies and window-cleaners, so far as genuine inborn talent is concerned. Since then I have got used to their abilities, Wales has even become a kind of second home to me, but my astonishment has not diminished, and I never ceased questioning others and myself, how this accomplishment was achieved.

Wherever we find a high standard of drama and theatre, its development was dependent on the existence of big cities where an audience is easily assembled and the means of theatrical production are to be found. Athens, Madrid, London, Paris, Vienna, Moscow, Berlin, New York became the centres of stagecraft only after having become the crowded capitals of flourishing realms, and the Italian and German theatres developed at the Courts of their many tiny, but wealthy, princes. In Wales, there are no big towns apart from a few industrial centres in the south, whose population to a large extent is English; there are only market towns and villages, the living-places of dealers, farmers and miners; and there are not, and never have been, any princes or nobles patronising the theatre, with the one exception in recent times of the aforementioned Lord Howard de Walden, who, himself a poet and playwright, has fallen in love with the Welsh people and their literature. Welsh myth, as preserved in the "Mabinogion," became the subject of his operatic trilogy, "*The Cauldron of Annwn*," which, with the music of one of Britain's greatest living composers, Joseph Holbrooke, deserves a revival indeed.

The foundations lacking that drama and theatre are built upon, we cannot help thinking that the great abilities of the Welsh are part of their national character, and that adverse conditions have been at work to prevent their development until now.

The southern blood of the Welsh, whose swarthy complexion and shining black eyes point at their Mediterranean extraction, gave warmth and splendour to their fairy-tales and legends—the very fountain-head from which the lays and stories of European chivalry are sprung. The sense of adventure, of strife and competition, immortalised in the tales of King Arthur, survived the defeat of Wales by the English, and still is to be felt whenever one meets Welsh people at their work and their recreations. They explode like dynamite, but their fire burns down quickly. Every moment of their lives is filled brimful with temperamental emotion, but they lack the discreet guidance of a steady and balanced mind.

Enthusiasm and disappointment are the two poles determining the history of the Welsh people as well as the career of the individuals. Even their everyday life, more than others', is full of extremes. Utmost happiness and utmost suffering are their allotted portion in life; and perfect bliss as well as deepest sorrow are bound to seek a stronger expression than ordinary words can provide: they lead to poetry and music.

The Welsh Bardic songs, their epic poetry, their folk-songs and chorals are well-known and renowned. They are the storehouses of their dark myths, their chivalrous legends, the vehicles for their cheerfulness and their despondency. Their dialectic ability, their sense of characterisation, their power of ecstatic frenzy has found no other stage to be displayed on but the pulpit.

The Welsh minister seems to have maintained the position the Druids held in pre-Christian Britain, having been not only the priests, but the judges and rulers of their people. Their sermons are furnished with all the power, flourish and vitality of the old Bardic songs. There is a certain relationship between the sing-song of the "Penillion," which are recited, while the harp plays the tune, and the "hwyl" of the preachers, a kind of recitative used for working up the audience to the highest pitch of excitement. These preachers are the very enactors of dramatic emotions. They create the atmosphere of tense suspense, the artistic climax of threatening tempests, the lightning and thunder of a passionate outburst, the calming-down of the storm and breaking of the sun through the clouds, which are the essential qualities of dramatic art.

The Methodistical revival of the eighteenth century, the brothers Wesley in the van, allied with the inborn dramatic disposition of the Welsh, contributed to the upbringing of these preachers. The simple chapels of the countryside proved too small to harbour the host of believers, the sermons were held in the fields, where the community assembled, as they may have done in ancient days to listen to the song of their Bards. The contents of the sermon, the ability of the preacher were discussed at the cobbler's and the blacksmith's shops, and remained the chief topic the whole week through. The mighty voice, the impressive gestures of a famous preacher were remembered down the years; parents told their children of the deeds of these heroes of the pulpit who built up a hallowed tradition, and were surrounded by pious legends, not very different from the halo which nowadays invests Henry Irving or Ellen Terry in the memory of old London play-goers.

If, thus, the chapel took the place of the stage; on the other hand, the clergy could not help looking at the theatre as at the Devil's device to tempt into sensuality and lust. We must bear in mind that artistic fashions take some time to spread from the capital over the provinces and that, therefore, in a way, the Methodistical movement was contemporaneous with the Restoration plays. Garrick's Shakespearean revivals cannot be taken as characteristic of the time; rather must we acknowledge that, by the general standard of plays and actors, the ministers were justified in blaming them for their licence.

A people, carried away by the enthusiasm of their religious leaders, taught by them to shun the play and the stage, and devoid of any theatrical tradition, could not be expected to become a nation of playwrights. There are no dramatic works among the vast number of literary products Wales can boast of, up to the middle of the eighteenth century, when Thomas Edwards, better known by his pen-name, Twm o'r Nant, wrote his famous interludes. These were played in his lifetime by farmers and miners on the platform of wagons, as was the habit of medieval performers, and accompanied by music and dance. The mere fact that a dramatic form used in the sixteenth century has been renewed so much later, points to the artificial root of these parabolic dialogues which, though aiming at popularity, were products of learning and may have been suggested to the son of Denbighshire by the famous morality plays in neighbouring Chester. They scarcely can be called plays as, written in rhyming lyric stanzas and consisting of dialogues and soliloquies, without any attempt at representing actions or dramatic developments, they introduce allegorical characters discussing some matter of general importance, addressing the audience or arguing with the fool who, as well as the miser, is a permanent feature of these interludes.

Twm o'r Nant was followed by quite a number of competing writers of interludes,—Jonathan Hughes, of Llangollen, the most successful among them—but their endeavours were of no consequence. The morality plays of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were the aftermath of the medieval miracle plays, the forerunners of the drama of the Renaissance; the Welsh interludes were the products of a literary fashion, introduced by an individual talent, not parts of a general artistic evolution. Isolated and ineffectual though they were, Twm o'r Nant and his pupils were on the right way in choosing moral and religious matters as the objects of their plays. There has been no nation whose drama did not take its start from religious ceremonies and faith.

However, in Wales, neither the deep religiosity of her population nor the romantic history of her middle ages brought about the upgrowth of a dramatic literature. No attempt at contending with the prejudice against the stage was made the whole of the nineteenth century through.

At the beginning of the twentieth century the ministers' opposition against drama and theatre became less strict. The decency of the stage during the Victorian age may have influenced these changes of mind which apprehended the new tendencies as slowly as they did 150 years ago. In the course of a few years amateur societies grew up everywhere, mostly in close connection with the chapels, the minister or the dean being chairman or producer, and soon the Eisteddfodau added dramatic competitions to their traditional programme of musical performances. Once the floodgates opened, a deluge of dramatic activities swept over the Principality.

From the very first the actors, eager to show their ability, found themselves in the awkward position of a theatrical manager without any plays at his disposal. To answer the urgent demand, dozens of men and women who never had had the chance of seeing a real stage with professional actors, who never had any practice of writing plays, any opportunity of studying the dramatic technique, set to work and produced dramatic sketches rather than plays, little tragedies and comedies in one act and with a few characters, adapted to the needs and possibilities of their actors. These "kitchen-plays," having invariably this living-room of the average Welsh people as the setting and dealing with the petty matters of domestic life, could by no means make a start with what may be justly called dramatic literature. There is no justification for plays aiming at mere entertainment, but business; and business was never in the minds either of Welsh amateur players or of their honest and honourable authors.

Friends of the Welsh dramatic movement very soon realised the necessity of having plays of a higher standard. T. Gwynn Jones tried with translations from Shakespeare and Ibsen. Lord Howard de Walden offered a prize for a Welsh play (in English or Welsh). It was awarded for a play so English in character that the adjudicators declared they would the next time refrain from awarding it if no play essentially Welsh was entered.

Lord Howard de Walden, indefatigable in his endeavour, tried another way. He undertook the production of valuable plays, translated into Welsh for this purpose, at the Eisteddfodau at Holyhead and Wrexham. Ibsen's *Pretenders*, produced by Komisarjevsky, and Hofmannsthal's *Everyman*, were well suitable examples of historical and religious dramas. The success of the latter brought about the production of Hofmannsthal's *Theatre of the World* in both Welsh and English at Liverpool. All these enterprises, however remarkable they were, remained isolated attempts of no real consequence up to the moment.

Another way was sought by the foundation of the "Welsh National Theatre" at Llangollen under the patronage of the same noble benefactor of the Welsh nation. A touring company was formed and performances given at divers places of North and South Wales. They proved to be a failure, both artistic and financial. There was no chance of getting together competent managers, producers and the necessary amount of capable professional actors.

On the other hand, there is no doubt that the Welsh theatre, when left completely to the well-deserving but erratically working amateur societies, never could develop to a higher level, even less give any encouragement to Welsh playwrights. Without impairing the importance of these voluntary actors and their leaders, there is still the task of creating a professional theatre and its necessary antecedent, professional actors.

The English stage possesses an abundance of Welsh actors, but most of them do not speak Welsh, and the few who do are almost unable to act in their own language, having never had any special training and being used only to the dialectic abbreviations of conversational Welsh.

The need of upbringing Welsh professional actors is most urgent. A Welshman, whose son or daughter wants theatrical tuition, must face the necessity of spending about £150 a year for fees, boarding and residence, if he sends his child to London. A Welsh dramatic school in Wales, with bilingual classes, would mean a reduction of this sum by fifty per cent. Part of the expenditure of this dramatic school could be covered by touring Wales during the holidays with student-performances. This "School-theatre" in a short time would become the repertory theatre of the Principality. It would also provide jobs for the ex-students who do not find engagements in London or the English provincial towns. Another group of associates would enter the services of the amateur societies and become of great use for them.

This school and its touring repertory theatre would be a permanent institution and, therefore, a stimulus to Welsh playwrights. It would soon become the centre of the theatrical activities of the whole country and exert a beneficial influence.

CONVENTIONS IN THE MODERN THEATRE

By JOHN ALLEN

IN the July 1936 issue of *Left Review* there was published an article on the theatre by Bert Brecht. Describing the experimental German Theatre between the Great War and the Third Reich, a period which we in England are inclined to dismiss as that of German expressionism, he says: "Neither the highly developed stage technique (or the post-war theatre) nor its dramaturgy, permitted us to present on the stage the great themes of our times. . . . A stock exchange could be, and was, shown on the stage, or trenches, or clinics. But they formed nothing but effective backgrounds for a sort of sentimental magazine story that could have taken place at any other time. . . . The development of the theatre so that it could master the presentation of modern themes and events, and overcome the problem of showing them, was brought about only with great labour." He then goes on to contrast the "Aristotelian" play with what he calls the "Epic" style, showing how the one is static and shows the world as it is, the other is dynamic and shows the world as it changes; how the one consumes the activity of the spectator, the other awakens it; how the one suggests, while the other argues; how the one depends upon excitement as to the *dénouement*, the other on excitement as to the course of the action. These are bold canons; and if anybody is anxious to test them further, let him apply them to a typical play of both styles, Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, for instance, with Odets' *Waiting for Lefty*.

The point in the above to which I should like to draw especial attention is that of the extreme limitations of the naturalistic convention for expressing contemporary themes; for there seems to be a large number of playwrights who think, quite mistakenly, that an audience objects to having its brain stirred, and that any idea which has not been expressed a considerable number of times before, must be sicklied o'er with the fatuity of magazine sentimentality. Brecht has a splendid paragraph in defence of "learning" in the theatre, showing that it need have nothing in common with the academic stiffness of the lecture hall, but that it can be of a kind which is full of joy, full of fun, a militant learning.

I do not propose to discuss Brecht's theories in detail because I have never seen one of his experiments, and because his work has been largely concerned with machinery. In such experiments he has spent many thousands of pounds. We have no such resources; and I believe that Brecht, by omitting any careful note of the position of the actor in his theatre, has stated only half the case, and that we shall find strength in our apparent limitations by being obliged to turn elsewhere for a substitute for machinery.

The immediate instinct of the dramatist who is appalled by the pettiness and triteness of West-end plays, is to write one on a vast cosmic theme, introducing Adam, Eve, Art, Science, Religion and the stars. He resorts, in fact, to a series of tricks and twists to give his play the fullness and vigour of which modern audiences are so much in need; but the result in almost every case is a mammoth, intellectual, dead-weight of a play. Theatrical strength is something very different.

Jacques Copeau suggested for me an escape from the impasse by saying: "When there are no conventions, there is no Tragedy or Comedy, only impressions: everything is dissipated. In order to develop in strength the theatre will have to simplify."

I propose examining this quotation in some detail because it takes us to the roots of a difficult and important question.

What is a theatrical convention?

The theatre is not life, but an art. Its business is to recreate life in the language of the

stage. In primitive times the nearest that man came to this strange tongue was miming and dancing. These were developed not only by all the numerous variations of pagan nature worship, but also by the gradual introduction of more foreign elements: the wandering minstrels who recited Homer, taking alternate speeches when two of them met, the deification of the winners of athletic contests, the elaboration of the ceremony at the Dionysiac festivals, the division of the chorus, the dialogue between each group and the chorus leader, and then the appearance of Thespia, who, by the use of masks and change of costume, introduced the art of characterisation, and, in order that he should have somewhere to change, the erection of a tent behind the altar. All these elements gradually fused together, until by about 500 B.C. a religious ceremony had become a play. The particular way in which plays were performed at the theatre of Dionysus during the ensuing century was the convention of the Greek Theatre. Changes in this convention were brought about in the usual way by the authors wanting a new way of saying new things, technical innovations, economic and political influences, disruptive philosophies, by everything that contributed to the way of living and the spiritual equipment of the Athenians. But the theatre in losing its religious innocence, gained its humanistic maturity, and found that it supplied a popular want that no other form of entertainment, art or worship could satisfy. What it is that people derive from the theatre that they do not get from novels, films, or other works of art, I do not propose to analyse. But it is something included in the word "theatrical." The theatre has a function of its own. At its best, it has nothing to do with literature, painting or music, and yet it always has a clean, strong streak of them all. That is why theatrical convention is so important a thing; for it controls the adjustment between the conditions of writing, acting, and general presentation.

Few people, even among the restless ones, seem to be aware that the triteness of the contemporary theatre is due to its no longer being theatrical; or that the reason for this is that the theatre is far too commonly served by people without culture. We have in England actors, designers, showmen, and producers, but no Men of the Theatre, no one to whom the theatre is a place of infinite and luxurious means of expression, no one whose love of craftsmanship is such that he will mark the style of his production by his choice of the smallest property, no one whose ideology is so strong that he will seek to express it in the make-up of the Servant in Act 3. It is pitiful to see the number of people who presume to revive the great classics of the theatre without even a working knowledge of the conditions under which they were written. Let me say at once that the great periods of the theatre, those from which there is constant inspiration to be drawn, are the Greek theatre, including Aristophanes, the Japanese No, and various growths of the European post-Renaissance theatre, notably the stage of the Elizabethans, of Molière, and of the *Commedia del Arte*.

What is there theatrical in a characterless figure shambling across the stage in a badly fitting lounge suit, and talking beneath his breath? But who can fail to be caught by Clytemnestra, fearfully masked, posed in the barbaric splendour of a Greek tragic heroine; by the massive flowing draperies of the Japanese No, the architecture of the theatre so finely worked as to be the setting for the play, by the coarse, humorous vigour of Plautus, the actor with his contorted mask and pendant phallic symbol, a sort of twisted piece of muscle; the wheeled pageants of the middle ages, with their Earth, Heaven and Hell upon a single cart; Burbage as Hamlet upon the great stage of the Globe, in the open air a spaciousness, in the building of the theatre an intimacy that is the especial quality of Shakespeare's plays; the theatre of Molière, the doctors, lackeys, Scapins, country cousins, and the would-be gentlemen, the elegant bores, the pseudo-litterati, the bourgeois marquises with their plumes, boots, laces, wigs, and their mistresses in slashed panniered furbelows; or by Callot's sketches of the Italian comedians, Arlecchino in his black leather mask, the Capitano with the drooping nose, the cruel Brighellas, and the crafty Zanies? This is the culture of the theatre which our professional actors seem to think so superfluous.

"When there are no conventions, there is no tragedy or comedy: only impressions. Everything is dissipated."

I am not concerned with the first implication of this statement, the necessity for an absolute standard of tragedy or comedy such as we find in our great periods: the urgency of the need for theatrical reform demands a more practical line. Our business must be the application of our ideas to the contemporary stage.

The convention of the modern stage is "naturalism" (not "realism," which means something quite different). A play is written, acted, and produced, to give the impression to the spectator that the fourth wall of a real room has been taken away and that he is looking through the gap. There is no need for me to insist on the feebleness of this as a theatrical convention contrasted with those I have described. The nearest that dialogue on the stage can come to that of real life is miles away from the original, and the same is true of the acting and the lighting. The situation is paradoxical, whichever way you turn. For when a man as able as Tyrone Guthrie sets out to be naturalistic, he achieves not so much the impression of real life, as a *compression*, which is sometimes memorable. Another example is that of Stanislavsky, who spent a year producing *The Cherry Orchard*, actually burning the hand of an actor who was unable to recall the sensation sufficiently vividly to reproduce it on the stage. One would be inclined to think that this, in the light of the curiously intense impression of real life that the plays of Tchekov give, marks the limit of naturalism. But when one searches for the best translation of these plays, one finds that the stiff, inflexible, almost unspeakable translations of Constance Garnett are in some curious way much nearer to the spirit of the original than others, far easier and more conversational.

In the same way, looking nearer home, we find that the most prominent dramatists of the last forty years have been those whose works, though not written in a strong theatrical convention, have certain attributes which raise them above the would-be naturalistic rank and file, and prevent them being completely naturalistic plays. I speak of the four-square construction of Ibsen's plays, the brilliant intellectual caperings of Shaw, the revealing integrity of Granville Barker, the skittishness of Coward. And yet, however revealing, however penetrating they may be, it is literary and not theatrical heights they reach.

"In order to develop in strength the theatre will have to simplify."

The conventions of the great periods of the theatre were not elaborate. They were pointed and recognised, not diffused and debated. In every theatre in the world, prior to the Renaissance, what scenery there was, was in strict subservience to the general convention of the stage. Every theatre had a permanent architectural background to which subsidiary indications were added, revolving prisms on the Greek stage, a little pine tree on the Japanese. Music, too, was in support of the spoken word, not emphasised on its own account. In both the Greek and the Japanese theatres, the choruses were supported by flutes or simple stringed instruments, and the line dividing speech and song was very fine. Costume was nowhere naturalised before the end of the eighteenth century, and even later than that we find Othello dressed in contemporary costume with a black face as the only indication of his Moorish ancestry.

But the exuberance of the Renaissance changed all this. Music and painting were introduced into the theatre not as elements subsidiary to the general convention, but as factors in themselves, as important as the text or the acting. The seventeenth century masque substituted for the real spirit of the theatre the glittering tinsel pageantry that symbolises the worst aspects of modern theatricality. It introduced scenery, poetry and stage decoration for no reason other than their own beauty. Italian composers, musicians and architects swarmed over Europe, while Italy's indigenous art produced such extraordinarily diverse achievements as the *Commedia del Arte*, Fiorelli, and the fantastic Baroque creations of the Bibiena family. Every element for which a position could be found was introduced into the theatre. Opera grew rapidly until, under the clumsy, passionate hands of Richard Wagner, it reached a peculiar and horribly bastard form in

which music and drama battled not for beauty, but emotional mastery. Our theorists then proceeded to make a point of the ability of the theatre to father all the arts, with the result that Mr. Cochran presents Bergner in a play by Barrie with music by Walton, *décor* by Augustus John, and production by Komisarjevsky. Imagine Kean appearing in a play by Byron, with music by Beethoven, and *décor* by J. W. M. Turner!

The situation must be faced bravely, with a clear idea of what we are aiming for in the future, rather than a reactionary "return" to anything. The point at which one should start this process of strengthening and simplifying, as it seems to me, is with the training of the actor, to give him a power, style and flexibility that to-day he has no means of acquiring; and to teach him to express with absolute truth the far greater demands that poetic drama will make on him. And this is the second point of attack; for the poetic convention is one of the strongest in the theatre, and poetry gives the easiest introduction into the conventionalised fictions of the theatre.

It is impossible to discuss manner fully without relating it to matter, and the particular direction of this technical activity will depend upon the spiritual direction of the poets who choose to write for the theatre. I have presupposed that this direction will be a socialistic one, on the grounds that it is its inability to express general movements, of which Socialism is the most important—that is the biggest condemnation of modern theatrical form.

If, then, our writers follow the Americans in their desire to express the great movements of our times, in Brecht's words, "the building up of mammoth industries, the conflict of classes, war, the fight against disease," the exact nature of the fusion between the re-trained actor, the poetic convention, the shape and nature of the stage itself and its audiences will have to be realised in practice. Actors, writers, painters, musicians and technicians can no longer hope for personal salvation: they must settle down to find a common style, a common unity, and a common strength by hard, persistent work in the theatre itself. That struggle will be as great as the struggle for Socialism itself. A convention is not to be had for the asking. It is made like a Bible in a thousand years: and the fact of our living at a time when we must sow rather than reap, increases rather than lessens our responsibility.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

JOHN DOS PASSOS

THE BIG MONEY. By JOHN DOS PASSOS. Constable. 7s 6d.

WITH *The Big Money*, John Dos Passos brings to an end a most ambitious trilogy. Faced with a country—or rather, with a federation of disunited states—and backed by a sectional or provincial literature, Dos Passos conceived the idea of writing a novel depicting the U.S.A. as a whole, and in relation to the rest of the world.

Mr. Percy Lubbock complained of *War and Peace*, that it was not one novel but two: one about war and peace, the other about youth and age. I think he was wrong. The sort of novel Tolstoi was trying to write and the sort of novel Dos Passos was trying to write can never have the roundness of a hazel nut. They are walnut-shaped, divided yet joined. One half is concerned with personal, the other with social, narration.

In the case of Dos Passos, the personal half is the strict narrative; the impersonal half, rather shrivelled perhaps, is contained in "The Camera Eye," "The News Reels," and the potted biographies.

The strict narrative has been carefully constructed. J.Ward Moorehouse is the keystone of the whole structure. All the other characters meet him, or his intimates; many are dependent on him. On the mechanical plane, therefore, all the characters are justified.

The importance of Moorehouse, however, is deeper than that. He stands throughout as the unflinching go-getter, the poor opportunist who is willing to sacrifice everything else in life to get to the top. Limited in sympathy and imagination, under-sexed and unquestioning, he can think of no other object than making good.

Opposed to him stand the I.W.W.s' first Mac, who is introduced at length and then for some reason dropped, secondly Ben Compton, and throughout the book Don Stevens. These militant workers appeal to the opposite side of humanity, to the interest of society rather than self.

Between these extremes, fluctuate a host of other characters, who see more or less clearly the issues at stake, and incline first this and then that way in hopeless doubt.

The first volume of the trilogy, *42nd Parallel*, introduces half of the main characters and brings them east to the war. The class-struggle proceeds throughout the two first volumes, but the workers are fighting a losing battle all the way. Capitalism decides the policy of the U.S.A. In the second volume, *1919*, the second half of the characters are introduced, and the narrative is carried up to the Treaty of Versailles. The ambivalence between revolt and acquiescence grows stronger and stronger, until with the success of the Bolshevik revolution of October, the workers begin to prophesy the coming of the world revolution. Dos Passos gets very well the anxiety among the allies that the imperialist war will lead to revolution; and the drastic methods taken to suppress all subversive tendencies. This volume culminates in the imprisonment of Ben Compton, the young Jewish revolutionary.

In a way this is the climax of the trilogy. The revolutionary movement has been castrated, literally. Capitalism has temporarily settled the question for all the hesitating betwixts and between. There is no serious alternative.

But *The Big Money* goes on to show them all making their piles: Charley Anderson, Margo Dowling, Richard Ellsworth Savage, they all get into the big money. But it is no use. They are not more, but less happy. In order to get to the top, they have had to sacrifice their beliefs, their sense of justice and truth. The money turns bad on them. They drink and whore and vomit, pitiful halfmen and halfwomen, brought by riches to the sense of their own poverty. Mary Field and Don Stevens carry on the workers' fight at the Saccho and Vanzetti trial. They are getting worn down with the sense of

their impotence in face of ruthless authority and a divided and self-seeking working-class. But they are still fighting at the end: and the unemployed figure Vag calls them to continue.

Dos Passos has succeeded in his narrative in penning a damning indictment of modern American capitalism. He has shown the flaw running through the capitalist system, that the interest of the state as a whole is always at variance with the interest of the individual. In choosing J. Ward Moorehouse as his central character, he has been able to show this principle in continuous action. Moorehouse is one of the first people to realise the connection between advertisement and propaganda. He gives up commercial publicity for Public Relations. The object of Public Relations is co-operation: to induce capital and labour to co-operate by bribing Labour leaders to betray their men and to induce foreign governments to co-operate with American business interests by bribing politicians and conducting Press campaigns at home and abroad.

The personal half of the trilogy is very successful: and it owes much of its success to the swift, self-explanatory method of narration. This method, however, won't carry much discussion or explanation of general affairs, political and social questions. Dos Passos was therefore faced with the alternatives of modifying his narrative or introducing new and separate material, differently treated. He chose the latter course.

He employs three different devices to extend the mood and scope of his personal narrative. "The Camera Eye" is the most obscure and least successful of these devices. I have seen it suggested that the Camera Eye (1) gives the associations of the author while writing the narrative, in which case it is an irrelevant creative residue; (2) that it represents the subjective side of life, presented in the form of a stream of consciousness, in which case it is divided ridiculously from the objective narrative; and (3) that being told in the first person, it allows the reader to identify himself with the author, so that he is one of the actors in the drama of the novel, looking out objectively on the others. None of these suggestions really fits, because the affectation, lack of punctuation and obscurity of these short sections defeat any of the objects proposed. If Dos Passos had written short notes of incidents in his own life at the period of each section, he would perhaps have achieved an identification with the reader. But he does not do this.

The "News Reels" have a dual, conflicting aim. Firstly, they try to give an impressionistic picture of the time. Headlines, news-scrap, and popular songs are interlinked, as though to say, "At this time, you would have read such and such in the paper and heard such and such tunes played." These pictures are made deliberately chaotic by omitting punctuation, telescoping one unfinished sentence into the middle of another: the whole being the sort of effect produced on a very stupid man running his eye over a paper. On the other hand, certain fragments are given in greater detail, suddenly evoking the picture of some labour riot, lynching or transport disaster. Where these fragments find their parallel in the personal narrative, they are of great force, because they increase the actuality of the fiction. "You can't accuse me of exaggeration," the author seems to say, "because here are other even worse examples taken from papers."

The purpose of the "News Reels" is to extend the personal narrative in space. Here are hundreds of other lives going on, hundreds of other disasters, tragedies and comedies. "At the same time, you see the graft of which I have given a single example, working in other ways; you see the mad speculation, the influence of big business on national policy, the same suppression of public rights, of free speech and workers' organisations going on all over the country, all over the world."

Again Dos Passos will offer no explanation. "Here are the facts," he says. "Read 'em and see for yourself."

But, unfortunately, not all the facts are there: and the tendency towards chaos usually gets the upper hand. The "News Reels" bewilder more than they enlighten.

The third device, an extension of the narrative in time, is very much more successful. These inset biographies of labour and capitalist leaders, brilliantly compressed and

made in the narrative. For example, at the end of 1919 the persecution of Ben Compton is followed by the biography of Paul Bunyan and the story of Wesley Everest, how when he stood up for the loggers' rights, he was jailed, and then taken off by the crowd and castrated with a razor, and then strung from a tree. The cumulative effect of these two acts of terrorism is so powerful that the reader is ready for the new resignation of *The Big Money*. Or take again the description of the Treaty of Versailles:

"January 18, 1919, in the midst of serried uniforms, cocked hats and gold braid, decorations, epaulettes, orders of merit and knight-hood, the high contracting parties, the allied and associated powers met in the Salon de l'Horloge at the Quai d'Orsay to dictate the peace

but the grand assembly of the peace conference was too public
a place to make peace in

so the High Contracting Parties

formed the Council of Ten, went into the Gobelins Room and
surrounded by Reuben's History of Marie de Medici

began to dictate the peace.

But the Council of Ten was too public a place to make peace in
so they formed the Council of Four.

Orlando went home in a huff

and then there were three:

Clemenceau,

Lloyd George,

Woodrow Wilson.

Three old men shuffling the pack,
dealing out the cards:

the Rhineland, Danzig, the Polish corridor, the Ruhr, self-determination of small nations, the Saar, League of Nations, mandates, the Mesopot, Freedom of the Seas, Transjordan, Shantung, Fiume and the Island of Yap:

machinegun fire and arson

starvation, lice, cholera, typhus

oil was trumps."

The Dos Passos trilogy has been called a landmark in American literature. Its literary importance, however, is not confined to the U.S.A. However much succeeding writers may differ, they must acknowledge in Dos Passos and Romaine the only two novelists writing of pre-revolutionary society who have faced the problems involved in presenting capitalism in decline. It is difficult to prophesy. It may be that the literature of our age, because it is literature of transition, will soon lose all but historical interest. But for the people of our time, Dos Passos speaks what we know to be true. Despite superficial differences of tradition and habit, his indictment of modern America stands also as an indictment of modern England: and his dilemma between self-interest and the interest of the community is just as valid for us as for Charley Anderson or Don Stevens.

A. CALDER-MARSHALL.

SILONE

BREAD AND WINE. By IGNAZIO SILONE. Methuen. 7s. 6d.

LET us once and for all discard the phrase, "propagandist novel." No novel has ever been written that was not propagandist: because novels are about human beings and their relations to one another, and it is impossible to write about human beings without explicitly or implicitly making a host of moral and social judgments.

The term "propagandist" was invented by propagandists of the right to stigmatise those of the left. While Left Wing writers were still thinking in terms of ideas, their literature was heavy with "sloganismus," bad propaganda. But now time has brought a sharpened sense of political issues in terms of people. The new literature of the left has come alive, and the novel, which looked like dying from automatism, is taking its place as the interpretation of contemporary life.

Ignazio Silone is an Italian exile. He has written a previous novel, called *Fontamara*, which I have not yet read. His new book has not been published in his native tongue. And one can see why. It is a devastating account of fascist Italy. Devastating, not because of its logic or its satire, but because of its truth. Pietro Spina, an exiled revolutionary, returns to Italy to carry on propaganda among the peasants, the *cafoni*. He has lost himself in ideas: truth, he fears, has become distorted into party expediency. He returns, because he has to return. He gets in contact with old school friends, old revolutionary workers. He sees them all changed, some into cynical opportunists, others into hopeless pessimists, others again to heroic, underground workers. He goes to the hills, disguised as a priest. He meets the gentry, the *cafoni*: the gentry hanging to the shreds of superiority, ruined by the bank smash, the daughter dedicating to Jesus the devotion that all around her need: the *cafoni*, good-hearted, ignorant, too shattered by their conflict with nature to fight their own cause against the authorities. He meets his old schoolmaster, a priest persecuted for his independence of mind, poisoned at the altar because he will not give way to the régime he despises and hates. And he sees where he and his friends have been failing. They have been trying to oppose the propaganda of fact with the propaganda of words. To the *cafone* words may be nice, fact is.

Silone's people are convincing. His fascists are not sadists, nor villains. They are go-getters, maybe unwilling but ready to sacrifice their beliefs to their bellies. His revolutionaries are fighting not only the powers outside them, but the enemy in themselves, fear, the temptations of despair. Pietro Spina himself is perfectly conceived: a false step and he would be made a prig, a fanatic or a hero of melodrama. His growth through the book to his tragic end is the true development of character, shifting backwards and forwards in development. Where many revolutionary writers have failed is to project desired states and feelings on to their characters. Where non-revolutionary writers fail is usually to accept the present as a foul necessity. Silone accepts the present, with its waste, its squandered idealisms and short-sighted self-interest; yet at the same time he has the revolutionary writer's belief in the future, in a society that can use those qualities in man which are now twisted and turned back on themselves. *Bread and Wine* is not a triumphant book, not joyful. There is very little to be joyful about. But it is full of humour, the sort of humour that is unquenchable, that comes bubbling out at funerals, or in church, or anywhere where emotion is prescribed by authority or convention. And that is one of the best tests of its seriousness. I, for one, can take no serious book seriously unless it makes me laugh in parts. Imagine a laugh in *Sparkenbroke*.

A. CALDER-MARSHALL.

NOVELS

PIE IN THE SKY. By ARTHUR CALDER-MARSHALL. Cape. 8s. 6d.

A GREAT deal has been said about the proletarian novel, but nobody has yet defined it adequately. I feel that the term ought to be abolished, if it cannot be extended to include works of fiction which are not written by novelists of proletarian origin, or which are concerned with themes other than proletarian. For it seems to me that in the transition from a class to a classless society, in the interim of a dictatorship of the proletariat stage of political development, all classes that form capitalist society are the objects of study, if only the fundamental basis of criticism in such studies is the outlook of the

proletariat, the outlook of the masses in whose hands lies the destiny of the human race.

Pie in the Sky is a study, not of the working-class, but of several sets of characters from different strata of society in a parallel development.

There is Carder Yorke, a man who has raised himself from the people to the plane of big business, prosperous, past middle age and in love with a pretty girl; there is his son, Bernard, whose stammering accents seem to signify how the great middle-class has come stuck; there is Henry Bolton, an unemployed Lancastrian worker, hoping for nothing, expecting less, and his patient wife; there are the familiar figures of London life; Fenner, the son of Carder Yorke, an intellectual, and his girl, Carrie, the school-teacher daughter of Henry Bolton, who has the courage of her tenderness, and seeing the flame of life that bursts out in the rhetoric of the communist Turten, leaves Fenner to dedicate herself to the cause; Alexey, who sees the phantasmagoria of a beauty in the kaleidoscope of his brain even as he serves coffee or wine behind the bars of the underworld; and several others who flash past us in the streets of everyday life. There is no unity of space throughout the novel, but with a technical daring and an imaginative courage that distinguish him from most of his contemporaries, Mr. Calder-Marshall creates the illusion of a cosmos within a cosmos, in which all the hopes, dreams, wishes of his characters flow into each other or come to cross-purposes, exactly as in life. And although the outlook of the author remains objective, the contrast of the lives of the various strata of contemporary English society is brought home with a vigour that is skilfully disguised behind an effortless ease of narrative.

But there is a self-consciousness in the handling of emotions which makes Calder-Marshall cynical when he should be tender, and which therefore makes the tenderness, for instance, of Alexey's dream-world, appear at times almost sentimental, ultimately preventing the novel from attaining the full depths of poignancy.

When he has overcome his hesitations and his capitulations, when he has fought out the moral struggle which the bravest minds of our generation have to wage in themselves, then, I believe, the immense vitality of his writing and its superb accomplishment will bring Calder-Marshall into the forefront of the revolutionary writers of our time.

Meanwhile, *Pie in the Sky* will be read as a document of present-day English life, as a transitional novel, as a work which marks the stage of development from the personalism of *At Sea* to an awareness of the fundamental problem of modernity.

MULK RAJ ANAND.

MINTY ALLEY. By C. L. R. JAMES. Secker and Warburg. 7s. 6d.

BROADLY, there are two types of narrative method. That which sets the important characters and their movements against the wide social scene, or that which by device of locality and situation artificially extracts and isolates the group of figures, absolutely excluding the social background.

Minty Alley follows the second type of method. The field is absolutely restricted within the walls of a small bakery which is also a lodging-house, and the interest is concentrated very intensely upon the group of individuals who live there. Young Mr. Haynes, an assistant in a bookshop, and a character of more developed consciousness than the rest, comes as a lodger to the establishment, and is throughout the book both observer and participant. The way in which these two rôles are balanced and reconciled shows great technical subtlety in the author. The dominant character is Mrs. Rouse, the proprietress of the bakery, whose courage in maintaining the business against odds, interacting with her weakness in relation to the other characters, notably in her infatuation for the callous lady-killer, Benoit, bring her sometimes almost to the level of high tragedy. All the characters are observed with an accuracy and sympathy which is carried forcefully by the simple, restrained and supple writing. The strength of the book lies in the fact that the method has been properly assimilated. There is no romanticising or

specialising of these people. They are authentic, precisely because their social reality is implicit throughout the book. The group becomes a valid microcosm within which the general social forces are at work.

The book's weakness lies in the fact that there is no complexity in the development. The psychological situation does not strictly develop, it only works out. That is to say, that it is essentially the same at the beginning as at the end of the book, only at the end it has all been explicated. The various conflicts unfold until they reach a crisis; the characters are no further involved with each other. Consequently, there is in parts a certain flatness, a lack of expectancy.

RANDALL SWINGLER.

THE FIGHTING ANGEL. By PEARL BUCK. Methuen. 7s. 6d.

THE charm of this story captured me in spite of my reluctance to continue reading it. It is a book to read quickly, gently, without any effort, preferably in bed, where no exertion need be made—then the life of the “Jesus church man,” Andrew, quickens into interest, and there is appreciation of his desire to save none but “yellow souls”—for white ones, not even those of his children, did not concern him. But in spite of being the centre of the book, Andrew is not so attractive a character as Carrie, his wife, who leaves her comfortable American home to brave life with him as a missionary's wife in China. She is not consumed by God, Work and the Spirit; she is too busy with her children, and with saving Andrew from his “natural enemies,” his fellow missionaries.

There are many delightful and entertaining incidents in this book, as, for instance, when Andrew returns to the States after being in China for half a century, and sees the women's post-war short skirts: “‘Their legs were awful,’ he said, remembering. ‘Big and fat, long and thin—’ Carrie could not bear it. ‘It does seem you needn't have looked at them,’ she said with severity. ‘I couldn't help it,’ he said simply. ‘They were lying around everywhere.’ We sat in silence, overcome by the idea of a ruined America.”

And there are, of course, Pearl Buck's excellent descriptions of China, of the people and of revolutions; but the reader of *LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY* would, probably, find greater interest in referring to Malraux's book on China.

K. GWENDA DAVID.

WAR WITH THE NEWTS. By KAREL ČAPEK. Allen and Unwin. 7s. 6d.

THIS work is not merely a scientific romance, though it could probably be read as such with enjoyment. There is a certain lack of definite intention in it. The first part of the book tells of the discovery by an old captain of strange newt-like creatures which can be trained to use tools and work. His vision of the uses to which the creatures could be put is realised by the formation of the Salamander Syndicate, the task of which is “The rational production and exploitation of the Newts.”

After this—rather unnecessarily long—introduction, the second part of the book tells of the efforts of the human world first to make the greatest possible use of the labour of the Newts, then to decide upon their status in the world, to control them, and finally to subdue them. There is much opportunity here for satirical commentary. For before long the Newts become indispensable to the human world; they are both a market and a source of labour, and its rapidly growing prosperity depends entirely upon them. To be effective, such a story should describe either a desirable possible world, or else a world which is an unflattering mirror to our own. But as the world of the Newts is not a possible world, it is only the attitude of the human world to the Newts that is satirised. However, the failure of governments to unite against the Newts is effectively described.

The third part of the book tells of the various terrorist acts by which the Newts test their strength against the human world, till at last that world is involved in widespread war upon them, while they slowly readjust the continents to satisfy their needs.

R. F. F. SUMMERS.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

SHORT STORIES

THE TRAMP AND OTHER STORIES. By DAL STIVENS. Macmillan. 6s.

IN Australia life is simpler, men are less entwined in the dense growth of ancestry and accent, nor has the land been moulded so completely by the mind of man. Dal Stivens, a young Australian, reflects this simplicity, his characters are complex, but their complexity springs from themselves. The young man raves (*Some day . . .*) at the smug stupidity of Philistines, but his anger is rational, its emotion objective, a clever, ordinary piece of work. *Night Flight* describes the flight of wild duck, culminating in a headlong dive at a corrugated iron roof mistaken for gleaming water. Stivens explores this admirably conceived subject carefully and interestingly, yet he cannot evoke the passion which his treatment cries out for. The blurb errs in claiming ". . . starkness, power and a passion," for Stivens has over-intellectualised his subjects. He is sincere, stimulating and always interesting, and one may hope for some brilliant work when he loses his ingenuous regard for European standards of culture.

D. STURGE MOORE.

DETECTION

MURDER IN THE FAMILY. By JAMES RONALD. The Bodley Head. 7s. 6d.

THE ANATOMY OF MURDER. By SEVEN MEMBERS OF THE DETECTION CLUB.
The Bodley Head. 8s 6d.

THE CAT CLIMBS. By C. A TARRANT. Secker and Warburg. 7s. 6d.

MURDER among books! I should have enjoyed *The Anatomy of Murder* considerably more had I not read first—*Murder in the Family*. The only unordinary thing about the Stephen Osborne family, who make Mr. Ronald's chief and lovable characters, is that they manage to be charming—to one another! Then Stephen loses his clerkship. Aunt Octavia, Stephen's rich and terrible sister, is invited for a diplomatic visit. She refuses to help her brother; and, after a family show-down, while she is waiting to catch the next train back to town, she is murdered. Stephen, his wife and children, are suspects; but the police cannot make up their minds which loser to back. After weeks of fearful publicity, the case is dropped. The villagers forget to boo, and the small Osborne world begins to settle down again to slow peace. After all, Octavia's money is to come to Stephen. Then *The Sunday World* announces a series of new articles on "The Family That Cannot Forget." The persecution is to start all over again. Stephen's wife goes to plead with the editor. How can he kill a good story? Every time a murder is committed and a culprit isn't caught, every paper in the country will dig up the Osborne case. When one of the children marry, the papers will remind readers of the murdered aunt. . . . The most self-sacrificing members of the family try to save the others by confessing to the murder, and so finishing the newspaper story by giving it the finality of a hanging. This is the meaty, human mystery which Mr. Ronald has given to his readers.

It isn't his fault that he mitigated my fun with *The Anatomy of Murder*, to which Helen Simpson, Margaret Cole, Dorothy L. Sayers, John Rhode, E. R. Punshon, Francis Iles, and Freeman Wills Crofts contribute. Each of these detective dictators re-tells the story of a crime. But the book is much more than "news to coalcastle," for each writer endeavours to throw new light on the old mystery. The authors' names are guarantee of how well the lighting is done. Yet, somehow, I couldn't help thinking of the Osbornes, of how innocent people may be hurt by the echo of a case.

Peter Dean, the accountant hero of *The Cat Climbs*, is the inferior-uncomplex type who gets dragged into a cat burglary, finds expression for his dreams of grandeur, and becomes the leader of a gang, while still carrying on his job at the office as day-time cover. Sound book mechanism! the adventures being the stuff that every accountant dreams between his lines of figures. In other words, a fine adventure yarn for every man who is a communist-anarchist-conservative. One fault, though, is that some of the struggles are too elaborately described, it is difficult to follow who is coshing who. But the book does illustrate how hard it is for the gentleman-crook to escape the sordid: the Cat found himself involved in two murders, something which he considered a little more in the way of wish-fulfilment than he had wished.

OSWELL BLAKESTON.

IS INDIA CIVILISED?

HINDU CIVILISATION. By RADHA KAMAL MUKERJEE. Longmans. 15s.

IS India civilised? was the question Europe asked when the first flush of English enthusiasm about the calicoes and spices and precious stones of the Indies had already abated with the satiety of conquest, and England began to spread stories about the degeneracy of heathen customs to justify the civilising mission of British rule in India. A number of Indian apologists sprang up to explain, and to defend Indian culture against the aspersions cast on their country by the alien conquerors. Some of these apologists abjectly accepted the values of their critics and others opposed to the alien attack the full blast of a tremendous superiority-complex which furbished a great and high-falutin idealism out of the contentions of the schools, and made claims for old India that were just ridiculous and too fantastic for words. The story that Rama flew over in an aeroplane to Lanka is now a commonplace, but there are other legends concocted by the Pundits who seek compensations in the past for India's present inadequacies, for instance, the story about the canal dug by order of Asoka from Punjab through Persia to Egypt, for the purpose of conveying armies to convert Europe to the faith of Buddha.

Mr. Radha Kamal Mukerjee and his brother have sometimes erred in this respect though it must be conceded that their task as historians of a country whose annals have been preserved more often in poetry than in prose, and whose religion views life in aeons of time rather than in years, was extremely difficult. Besides, they were both influenced by and reacting against Macaulay; and they have lived through a time of great national fervour, and are too deeply committed to reactionary ideas to write objectively to-day. Immediately, for instance, after Prof. Mukerjee defines history in his new book as an impartial science whose business it is to record facts, he quotes Croce to say that history "ought to have a bias,"—which kind of bias we all know from the more recent writings of this philosopher, who supports fascism. Such muddled thinking is the more dangerous because *Hindu Civilisation* is intended to be a text-book. Prof. Mukerjee's immense erudition is also unaccompanied by any feeling for the art works of ancient and medieval India, which are illustrated in this book *ad hoc* and without any attempt at a considered appreciation or depreciation.

It is not known whether a younger school of historians has arisen in India, which seeks not only to interpret India, but to change it. It is to be hoped that the opportunity which the new *Encyclopedia* designed by the International Association of Writers for the Defence of Culture offers will call forth the potential talent which exists. Meanwhile, we can do no more than thank Prof. Mukerjee for the material that he has for years so laboriously gathered.

MULK RAJ ANAND.

OUR DAILY BREAD

BEHIND THE SPANISH BARRICADES. By JOHN LANGDON-DAVIES. Secker and Warburg. 12s. 6d.

MANDATES. By NEIL MACAULAY. Methuen. 6s.

THE BRITISH EMPIRE. By JOHANNES STOYE. Bodley Head. 12s. 6d.

FOREIGNERS AREN'T FOOLS. By CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS. Longman. 5s.

ZERO HOUR. By R. FREUND. Methuen. 10s. 6d.

THE NAZI CONSPIRACY IN SPAIN. By the Editor of *The Brown Book of the Hitler Terror*. Gollancz. 5s.

FAR EAST IN FERMENT. By GUENTHER STEIN. Methuen. 10s. 6d.

SPAIN IN REVOLT. By HARRY GANNES and THEODORE REPARD. Gollancz. 5s.

THE SPANISH TRAGEDY. By E. ALLISON PEERS. Methuen. 10s. 6d.

DESERT ENCOUNTER. By KNUD HOLMBOE. Harrap. 9s.

HITLER OVER RUSSIA. By ERNST HENRI. Dent. 8s. 6d.

MR. MACAULAY, who in *Mandates* denies with some heat that any attention ought to be paid to the German demand for colonies, and Herr Johannes Stoye, with his half-grudging admiration of the British Empire, make a delightful pair. Mr Macaulay, like the Dr. Goebbels whom he flays so unmercifully, himself sees bogeys—the “bankrupt” League of Nations, the “Sinister Bank for International Settlements,” “Godless” Russia, to say nothing of “the world hegemony of Judaeo-Masonry.” Many agree with Mr. Macaulay about the undesirability of allowing Germany any colonies until she shows greater humanity in dealing with “subject races” in her own country; nevertheless, *non tali auxilio*; Mr. Macaulay would make neither an intelligent nor a helpful ally. He seems to have affinities with the Social Creditites. Let it be stated then, that I have *not* been paid by any bankers, international or otherwise, to ridicule him. Possibly for that reason I am willing to admit that some of his facts are useful. (On receipt of a fat cheque from an international financier, I am willing to withdraw this statement.) About Herr Stoye, however, there is something genial and likeable, although he is a nazi. As a concession to English taste, in the English edition of *The British Empire* Sir Herbert Samuel is Sir Herbert Samuel. In the German edition, however, he is the *Jew* Sir Herbert Samuel. The importance of *The British Empire*, however, is not in details such as that, but in its revelation of the god-awfulness of the German professorial mind under nazi influence. It has to be read to be believed. I recommend it to the connoisseur of such things. Mr. Hollis's *Foreigners Aren't Fools* is really journalism. The author has a series of talks with an Italian, a German, a Frenchman, a Russian, a Japanese, and an American, each a “man in the street” in his respective country, and comes back a little wiser about their respective points of view. My chief objection to this reporting job is that it tends to produce in the reader a slightly despairing complacency and to increase his natural tendency to avoid making any really serious attempt to understand what the confounded muddle the world is in is really all about. I am afraid I really have the same objection to Mr. Richard Freund's *Zero Hour*, though his book is far more serious, far more important, and far more useful. For Mr. Freund's picture of the national antagonisms that divide the world as they appear on the surface I have nothing but respect. But I cannot help regretting that he has set his face against analysing the internal social antagonisms underlying the national antagonisms. Mr. Freund is a journalist, and in this parcel of books the journalists make a far better show than the professors. Mr. E. Allison Peers is Professor of Spanish in the University of Liverpool, but his *Spanish Tragedy* is almost completely unhelpful. His book is a surface political history of the years preceding the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, but it is devoid of any deeper understanding of what is involved, and is vitiated by a complacent

and abominable impartiality. Mr. Harry Gannes and Mr. Theodore Repard are journalists, being the foreign editor and assistant foreign editor respectively of the New York *Daily Worker*, and they try hard to explain the Spanish conflict on Marxian lines. They over-simplify, however, which their master would not have done, and are guilty of occasional inaccuracies. Also they do not really know their Spain, and their book is curiously artificial and remote. Not so Mr. John Langdon-Davies's book, a vivid picture drawn by an eye-witness, from which there breathes the breath of life. This surely tells one more about the Spanish struggle than either of the other two. *The Nazi Conspiracy in Spain*, as its title implies, discloses the German finger in the pie. In *Desert Encounter* we have a book that has been over-praised. I cannot believe with Mr. Driberg that in Knud Holmboe "We have lost a potential T. E. Lawrence." Holmboe's, however, is a moving story, as well as being a timely disclosure of the meaning of Italian imperialism in practice. Mr. Guenther Stein's *Far East in Ferment* is a real and valuable study of the Far Eastern powder magazine, showing the weakness as well as the strength of Japan's position in the face of the Soviets, and the growing Chinese unity against her. Finally, with Herr Ernst Henri, we are in the fascinating position of being admitted to the *Inside History of the Future*. We are in a tense world of plotting and planning on a gigantic scale. The author knows all about the approaching world catastrophe, and initiates us into Hitler's plans for the invasion and defeat of the Soviet Union, and he also knows the exact reason why the invaders will be defeated. It is all very fascinating and horrible and nightmarish, and a great deal of it is very acute and intelligent, but verily, verily I cry unto you, Herr Henri, in the words of Engels, that history always keeps a card up her sleeve, and that I should have much more faith in your prognostications if you were not invariably the man who knew what it was.

E. M.

THE HISTORY OF SWITZERLAND AND CONSOLIDATION OF NATIONS.

By GEORGE WETTSTEIN. Zuerich. Printed by H. Tschudy and Co., St. Gall.

THE author sets the history of Switzerland in concise, but detailed and ironic, contrast with that of Europe. Individuals, we know, are not allowed to commit the crimes which, among countries, are labelled as "patriotism." Switzerland is an example of people of several tongues and diverse origins living together in harmony. Why, says this writer, should not Europe follow the example of Switzerland? There is no reason—except those vested interests, against which it is our duty to fight; but not, as the younger generation forget, in the way those very interests would wish. Switzerland has shown what can be achieved in the middle of Europe. Why must Europe remain blind to a lesson that involves no tears? "There is enough space in Europe for all Europeans if its tariff walls, stretching for 20,000 metres, are gradually lowered . . . there is enough work and bread in Europe for all Europeans if interchange and freedom of movement are not hampered by the blind egoism of individuals, parties, classes, races and states . . . there is prosperity and security for all in Europe if the states will cease spending up to fifty per cent. of their finances on armaments, which are a menace to all, and cease to tax the national wealth to such an extent that in the end it breaks down under the enormous burden of its machines of death." Need we say more? But can we do less than draw attention to this pamphlet, which, in turn, points the way to a resolution of more than recurrent fears, being permanent phobias?

A. WILLS.

ANTHROPOLOGY

NAVEN. By GREGORY BATESON. Cambridge University Press. 18s.

IT is rare for an anthropologist of the type engaged in field work to use his garnered facts mainly in order to verify and correct the preliminary induction furnished by his previous observations. Though such a path may have its pitfalls, no method is more likely to enable the science to accomplish some real advance. Thus it is positively

stimulating to find that here Mr. Bateson, despite his evident familiarity with his savage subjects, is making no effort to introduce his reader to the entire culture-complex of the Iatmul, a head-hunting tribe of north-eastern New Guinea. Instead of merely compiling a source-book for the benefit of the armchair student, he sets out to focus his own, and the reader's, attention on a single well-marked class of ceremonial acts, of which the native name is *naven*. These are rites of congratulation, which a man must in duty perform so as to celebrate the various social achievements of his sister's child, whether son or daughter. Though it is especially the occasions when advancing age entails fresh duties that are thus honoured, such compliments cannot be brought under Van Gennep's convenient category of *rites de passage*; for, as the author is careful to point out, they are altogether ancillary to any recognition of the significance of the event on the part of society at large.

The point, then, of these customary acts would seem to be that they afford expression and give emphasis to a certain emotional relationship between the novice and his or her maternal uncle; the mother herself, not to speak of the father, meanwhile remaining in the background. Stranger still, the mother's brother must in the circumstances take on the guise of a woman. By a change of garments—"transvesticism," as Mr. Bateson would have us term the process—he symbolizes the mother herself with all the change of sex involved. In this way is dramatised the pride which the mother's kin as a whole will naturally take in the youth's social progress.

This study, however, is more than a dissertation on a ritual peculiar to an isolated group of primitive folk. Having perhaps started with nothing wider in view, it "grew . . . until it has become the present book, and now its purpose is no longer to put forward a theory of Iatmul transvesticism, but to suggest methods of thinking about anthropological problems." In particular, the question is raised how "structure" and "function" are to be understood in their application to human society. In the course of his examination of this fundamental problem, the author introduces a new and important concept of his own in the shape of a process termed "schismogenesis," whereby not only social groups and the sexes as such, but likewise individuals, are held to intensify their differences as a result of the interactions that ensue on contact. Here Mr. Bateson gives a lead to the anthropologists in seeking to repay the mounting—though grudgingly contracted—debt that sociology owes to individual psychology in conjunction with psycho-analysis.

For the reviewer special interest attaches to the way in which individual idiosyncrasies of character and behaviour are brought into relation with temperamental traits due to heredity and so possibly to be correlated with physique. The author has admittedly drawn inspiration from Kretschmer, but makes only a brief mention of matters directly relating to physiology or genetics. Individual differences, however, being taken for granted, valuable suggestions are offered as to how by means of the mechanism of schismogenesis a slight push or bias in the direction of masculinity or femininity, of schizoid or cycloid behaviour, could lead to an exaggeration of the tendency in question; with the further result that by a process of self-acceleration a specific cultural "pattern," of the type that Dr. Ruth Benedict was the first to characterise, would come into being. Thus, if racial heredity be assumed to cause a series of slight individual impulses to tend in a single direction, we can thereupon invoke the mechanism of schismogenesis so as to bring closer together the hitherto independent concepts of race and culture. Evidently, then, this is a book that will repay—as it will also demand—close reading on the part of all students of anthropology who are accessible to fresh ideas.

WE, THE TIKOPIA. By RAYMOND FIRTH. Allen and Unwin. 30s.

TO land of one's own free will on the beach of a lone South Sea island, brown with an unmixed native population, takes no little courage. Even if in these days the risk of being slain and eaten be remote, there remains the dread of feeling lost among a crowd of highly suspicious and hence none too friendly strangers. All honour,

then, to Dr. Firth for having gathered such rich spoils at the cost of a year's self-marooning in remote Tikopia, where its twelve hundred inhabitants maintain their indigenous culture in its pristine vigour or very nearly. Racially they are true Polynesians, and, whatever their precise historical affiliation with the larger societies to the south, such as Tonga or Samoa, are ultimately at one with all the rest of this widespread branch of the human family in respect alike of physique and general culture. Hence Dr. Firth, who is already an authority on the Maori, might well hope to feel himself at home among this outlying colony of a maritime folk who at this point are virtually intruding into the Melanesian area.

While striving most successfully to cover the whole sociology of this specimen of the older unsophisticated Polynesia, teeming as it is with points of special interest, Dr. Firth has not forgotten to note that from a literary and even a scientific point of view a central interest must be provided if his descriptive matter is to hang together. He therefore uses the kinship system as a key to the whole cultural life, and as an expert "functionalist" exhibits the various activities that make up the daily round in all that interdependence which follows from the fact that the relationships of each and all as determined by their marriage law involves mutual rights and duties constituting their whole code of morals—and, indeed, of manners as well. At the same time, Dr. Firth agrees with Dr. Malinowski in concentrating on the actual working of what may on the face of them be rigid conventions, and yet will be found in practice to be fairly elastic. Thus a purely juridical analysis of the social conditions will not suffice, since a psychological treatment can alone make allowance for all that play of temperament which causes human beings to act towards one another, not as abstract social factors, but rather as individuals whose various idiosyncrasies are bound to be reflected in their several reactions to the prevailing custom. If Dr. Firth's account of Tikopia be compared with what Dr. Rivers has to say about it on the strength of a much shorter visit, we can the better appreciate the value of this more patient and intensive type of study that seeks to judge the institutions of a primitive people not merely by the letter but by the spirit; for this gives life and so, conversely, is always reasonable if the life be healthy. After a year on Tikopia, Dr. Firth could well talk of what "we," the islanders, aim at being and are; for by this time he had identified himself with that basic fund of common sense, mostly subconscious, which enables any human society to keep going, whether by the help of its laws or in despite of them. After all, it is not as a system of rules, but as a source of kindly feeling, that kinship works

J. R. DE LA H. MARETT.

SAVAGE CIVILISATION. By T. H. HARRISSON. Gollancz. 16s.

T. H. HARRISSON joined the Oxford University Expedition to the New Hebrides in July 1933. Early in 1934, the expedition officially returned, but Harrisson stayed on until he had spent his fare home. Then he went as "native" as he could, wandering among tribes in the interior of Malekula and Espiritu Santo, taking a census, living their life, eating their food and getting drunk on kava. It was perhaps by this conformity to native life that he avoided catching any of the diseases which kill so many white people on these islands. He lived among cannibals and those who had lately given up cannibalism. He had unique opportunities for studying savage civilisation not as a visitor but as a participator.

The first seventy pages of his book are devoted to a description of this life, building up the picture with skilful literary rather than scientific details. In these islands, "Pig is Power." This does not mean pigs, fine for their meat or fertility, but merely for their fore-tusks, which are trained to curve back and round and through the gum once, twice or even three times. The condition of your pig doesn't matter, but the rings of its tusks do. In a country where the necessities of life are obtained with some ease, the only inducement to energy is prestige or "face." The life of advancement rests on this pig prowess; pigs are wealth and the sacrifice of pigs gives "face." When you shoot a rare bird, you don't

eat it. You give it to someone else, and thereby gain "face." The receiver of the gift loses "face" until he has returned the gift, if possible by a similar gift. Investment consists in lending out pigs. The borrower has to pay back a pig with tusks as long as the first pig's would have grown to be by that time. That is the interest. It is more blessed to lend than to borrow, because you don't have the trouble or expense of looking after the pig and you don't incur the danger of the pig snapping his tusks.

Harrisson went all over two or three of the islands in the New Hebrides. The anthropology of the islands showed itself complex. There are many native strains, pygmoid, Polynesian, etc. Also the christianised native of the coast is at an entirely different stage of development from the heathens of the interior. The whites, planters, traders, missionaries and governmental authorities must all be included in the survey if New Hebridean civilisation is to be understood. And not only that, the present cannot be fully understood without a knowledge of the past.

For this reason, Harrisson deals with the history of the islands in as much detail as he can. He describes the Spanish discovery by de Quiros in 1607, Bougainville's visit in 1768, Cook's visit six years later. The material to hand is vivid and contradictory. Harrisson has made the most of it: he has reconstructed the natives' attitude from their stories, and the white men's from their mutually recriminatory accounts. In each case the story is the same. A clash of two civilisations alien to one another, fear mastering all other emotions, bloodshed in which the whites, having guns, got the upper hand. He describes the nineteenth century history, which outdid the violence and bloodshed of former contacts a hundred times. He correlates the accounts of missionaries, sandalwood traders, blackbirders, and naval commanders, using each as a check on the other, and all as a condemnation of the butchery of white men. Over and over again it is the same story. Sandalwood traders land, trade wood at fantastic prices, quarrel with the natives, burn their villages, rape their women, shoot the men, and possibly leave them with the germs of a disease which carries off far more than they ever shot. (The sandalwood traders, each in cut-throat competition, often deliberately inflamed the natives so that the traders who came next would get a hot time.) The new whites who land are shot, or some are shot. Maybe they are missionaries. They're shot all the same.

The Government is then informed, and a French or English gunboat comes along and bombards the shore: sometimes a landing party attacks a village—usually the wrong village—burns it down, and takes all the pigs, possibly kills a few natives. The next white man to land will pay for it with his life.

Later, the missionaries came to be distinguished in most cases from the traders, but not always. Innumerable commissions were appointed to investigate the labour trade from the islands to Queensland and Fiji. Innumerable reports arrived at the same conclusion, that the labour trade was slavery, natives were kidnapped without warning, exported in conditions so foul that many died on the journey and put to work so callously that even more died in exile. Of the 11,206 islanders imported into Queensland 1868-76, there returned only 4,129. But the complaints of missionaries and the reports of commissions were as ineffective as the attempts to bring the white murderers of natives to justice. At the same time as the islands were being depopulated by white slavery and epidemics, their land was being annexed by white settlers, who made the natives drunk and bought up all the land they needed for almost nothing. With the final extinction of the slave trade labour at the close of the last century, these traders assumed the greatest importance, developing the land for the production of copra, cocoa, cotton, etc. The prices of these commodities are falling so low that the planters are faced with ruin, while the profits of Unilever increase annually.

At last gunboat justice was considered inadequate, and after much discussion the Condominium was established. This government consists of a French National Judge, an English National judge, a Spanish Neutral (deaf) Judge President; a Dutch Registrar; and a Spanish Public Prosecutor. Harrisson describes the Condominium as Pandemonium Government. Between April 1911 and November 1912 the total number of fines

inflicted by the Joint Court on British subjects was £28 8s., of which £16 19s. was collected. On French subjects £456 14s. 8d., £65 13s. 6d. collected.

Harrisson's final sections deal with his own experience on the islands; the death of the Viennese, Siller, whose condition was, despite the most desperate efforts to make a fortune, more depressed than any native's; the landing of Douglas Fairbanks, Senior, on Malekula in September 1935, making a Hollywood film of natives with Chuck Lewis.

Harrisson's writing is vigorous, colloquial, witty. He has interests far wider than those of the usual anthropologist. He regards the New Hebrides not as a type of civilisation completely removed from our own, but a test, perhaps a lesson from which we can judge our own civilisation more truly. He goes very far. To understand the New Hebrides at the end of the last century, he rightly explains the political and economic events which led to the suppression of native labour in Queensland. But he does not go far enough, to my mind. He sums up the guilt of black and white:

"In this history, it has been the white man who has needed an advocate; for we cannot justify his bloody actions, *they are not a part of what we talk about as our civilisation*. The black needs no advocate, only a doctor. He has been decimated from millions to thousands; his culture wiped off the slate in most places."

The history of the New Hebrides may not be a part of what we *talk about* as our civilisation. The Helot system was not part of what people talk about as Greek civilisation. But nevertheless, Greek civilisation was impossible without that slave basis: and our capitalist imperialisms are impossible without the submersion of nine-tenths of the population of the dominant countries and ten-tenths of the subject countries. It is the part of our civilisation that Mr. Harrisson might well have considered it worth while talking about.

A CALDER-MARSHALL.

MYTH

THE HERO. By LORD RAGLAN. Methuen. 10s. 6d.

THE trouble with this amusing book is that it is too busy lashing a sea of adversaries to expound a theory of its own, or even work towards getting one. For instance, the part about English pedigrees is only a good and well-informed joke; it adds to the general atmosphere of scepticism, but by the end of the book it is, if anything, a point against the main argument. There is no doubt that something like what the argument asserts is true, but you want to know when and how much; and this is not what the enthusiastic champion of it wants to tell you.

The story is that figures like Falstaff, Robin Hood, King Arthur, Achilles, etc., are essentially cult-heroes, and therefore derived from primitive ritual, not from history. Now there seems a fair case for saying that the Iliad and the Norwegian Eddas had religious rituals behind them; though even this gives no reason for saying that Achilles never existed, because it is admitted that a stock myth can be attached to a real person—e.g. Henry V in this book. And it is likely enough that very old conventions of story-telling, so old that they go back to primitive ritual, were used in building the stories of Falstaff and Robin Hood. But for Lord Raglan's case against the historicity of these people he needs a regular tidy religion with an established ritual, devoted to them by name, and falling out of use about when the stories were put together. This he makes no attempt to provide; but he is prepared to throw us a theory, for instance, that all Rip Van Winkle stories are derived from a yearly drama, in which "Robin Hood, or whoever the hero was, might well come on and explain that while the audience were a year older than when he saw them last, he himself was older merely by the length of a night spent with his May Queen." (p. 253.) No doubt this would go down well enough

if there was such a drama, and if he said it, but why should a medieval make a myth out of that? The rituals they took seriously were things like marriage and the mass, and in some cases a cult of Satan; but Robin Hood was a story, a thing on a different footing—whether there was some village jolly-making about him or not.

The reason Lord Raglan has to suppose that these dramas existed is that he wants to plunge over the horizon of history into the dawn of the human mind; the minds of really primitive people are half devoted to a practical magic and half blankly unimaginative; therefore, they will only get ideas for stories out of the magic ritual of their religion. Now it is quite possible that ancestral memories of sun-worship or Druids or what-not are still dimly maintained in English villages. But if this is what he has to claim, it is grotesque to mix his thesis with the assertion that no tradition lasts longer than a century and a half, and it gives him no basis for saying that King Arthur or Robin Hood never existed, because there must, anyway, have been some reason for tying the much older ritual on to a myth about a special period. And whatever may have happened about Arthur, Lord Raglan clearly means the mistakes in family pedigrees as examples of the same kind of unhistorical myth; now he really cannot argue that the squires have been secretly maintaining a Golden Bough ritual, in which the head of the house must at set intervals be ceremonially disguised as the pretended ancestor, and appear to be slaughtered and re-born.

The difficult question about the Fraserian tradition of the hero seems to me to come in here, in the question how it was maintained among people who no longer took it seriously. It is easy to make the Golden Bough a stick to beat the historians, but there is a good deal of Fraser material in English literature, and you want to know how it got there. Lord Raglan tends to a diffusionist idea, that it all came from Egypt; one could more easily say that it is inherent in the human mind. Even so the Far East seems to produce Fraser material of a different type, the hero One with Nature, not the Dying God, so that different races would have to have different inherent ideas. Actually, a man like Herrick may well have known quite clearly what he was about; even the gossip about savages became popular as soon as they were discovered, and he knew his classics and his village—the whole range of sources that Fraser took in detail. But if there is anything in Lord Raglan's method of interpreting history, these ideas must be attached to us in some more serious way.

The main objection to explaining things by "ritual dramas" is, of course, that nothing is explained—how did the ritual dramas come to be different? To be told that Rip Van Winkle and Robin Hood are two more of the same old hero is quite different from being told their stories. If the stories had to come in from outside they might just as well have been actual striking events, treated metaphorically or otherwise, which would refute Lord Raglan's view that myths never contain fragments of history. (Anyway, the main use of tradition for the historian is that it shows what people thought important.) If they were invented by founders of primitive religions, this would presumably refute his view that no illiterate ever invented a story; if they were learned from dreams this refutes his view that dreams cannot affect religion, a view already refuted in detail by field-workers on Red Indians. And so on. Even if the problem could be solved in this way, by making a mosaic of cases which fit one theory, still the real problem would lie behind. But certainly the detached cases here are well worth reading, and the question raised is important.

WILLIAM EMPSON.

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

THE NILE. By EMIL LUDWIG. Allen and Unwin. 16s.

THE personification of rivers is a conception very nearly as old as the history of man. From the earliest mythology, from Father Tiber down to Father Thames, the life and movement of rivers have suggested human or superhuman qualities and characters that have excited man's imagination and been celebrated in story and song.

Dr. Emil Ludwig, renowned for his close and accurate observation and analysis of human character, has had the pleasing fancy to apply his powers to presenting the life story of the most ancient and famous of all rivers, the Nile. He traces its story from its source. Or rather, from its two sources, for he shows the two rivers, the Nile of the African lakes, and the Nile of the Abyssinian mountains, as two brothers, differing widely in character, as they do, the one grave and steady, the other headlong but rich and generous, both uniting in one great stream at Khartoum to render their service to man.

The idea is stimulating but in presentation not quite convincing. The analogy between a river and a person is, in fact, not perfect enough, the real interest must lie in the human events for which the river is in part the background. To make the scenery, so to speak, the hero of the story is to render the dramatic interest somewhat fitful and confusing. The book irresistibly suggests a film composed, indeed, with more dramatic power and a far better sense of accuracy and a truer observation than most films, but it is an afternoon diversion for a spectator rather than a contribution to literature.

Nevertheless, there is much fine writing and clear vision of both nature and man. The story of Abyssinia is told with the real touch of the historian and the critic, and there is irony and detachment in the account of European adventure and penetration into Africa side by side with a serious appreciation of human enterprise and endeavour. The characters of English worthies who fought and suffered in the regions of the Nile, of Baker, Gordon, and Kitchener, stand out sharply and strongly pictured. Here Dr. Ludwig is in his own element and his success in these portraits suggests the wish that he had chosen one of these figures for his foreground.

The translator has done her work admirably and the reader is nowhere conscious that he is not hearing the "direct voice."
A. B. BUTTS HOWELL.

THE FLOWERING OF NEW ENGLAND. By VAN WYCK BROOKS. Dent. 15s.

MR. VAN WYCK BROOKS says in his preface that "this is the first of a number of volumes in which I hope to sketch the literary history of the United States." It is certainly an easy, almost a lazy, way to acquire a knowledge of all the chief writers of New England, during the nineteenth century, without the trouble of reading hundreds of, to us dull, and ponderous books. It is historical, it is literary, and a splendid short cut, for those who have not had to pass examinations in the works of Emerson or Prescott, to a knowledge of the roots of American literature.

Victorian books were seldom supplied with biographies, and it is exciting to learn that Dana only sailed once more to sea after he returned from the Horn, but spent his days in a lawyer's office, or tramping about the windy Boston common; that Prescott was continually blamed for leading an apparently gay and useless life, and that Miss Peabody had the habit of stumbling absentmindedly into snowdrifts, thinking about Chinese grammars.

American literature to-day is breaking from the partly English, partly German, tradition that ruled the publishing world almost up to the War. It is the more necessary that we should know exactly what this tradition represented, and there could be no better beginning than to read this history. It may sound a dull subject but there are no dull pages, and it is particularly valuable to the English reader, to whom much of the material will be unfamiliar, though the names will be recognised from hearing them in childhood.
BRYHER.

TIBETAN JOURNEY. By MME. ALEXANDRA DAVID-NEEL. Illustrated. Lane. 12s. 6d.

BORDER bandits and Government authorities are still extremely puzzling. Gareth Jones is killed. Mr. Fleming passes unbothered. Mme. Alexandra David-Neel steers a middle course; no reason given for travelling; no authenticating dates. To my mind, the L.M.S. does these mystery-trips better. Chapter 3 on Primitive Communism with its banquet-fund, "to eat is the predominant thought of everyone,"

is the best out of nine, and apparently rake-off and nepotism is as rife as in South Wales. And how irritating to be told prayer-wheel is incorrect, without an alternative translation. I liked the bits about a louse, searches for evening flops, and her adopted son. The authoress doesn't lay on the paint too thick, and is always refreshing, even confessing many days were boring.

KEIDRYCH RHYS.

RIPTIDE IN THE SOUTH SEAS. By WILLARD PRICE. Heinemann 15s.

TO read the flood of literature written by tourists, is apt to make one associate the South Seas almost exclusively with Tahiti, Honolulu, surf-riding and gaily decorated cruising steamers. Willard Price has done his readers a great service by introducing them to an unexplored bunch of islands under Japanese Mandate, about three hundred miles east of the Philippines.

Riptide in the South Seas will suit the taste of the average reader of travel literature, rather than that of the scientist. Although the author has by no means neglected the local flora, fauna and inhabitants, his information is supplied in terms easily understood by all, and he does not concern himself with the more complicated and scientific side. He strikes the happy medium between a lighthearted account by a holiday-maker, and a pompous volume crammed with anthropology, obscure theories, and long pages of undigestible history.

His style is amusing and easy to read; he rambles entertainingly from subject to subject. Whatever his politics may be, he keeps his own opinion in the background, and does not allow it to influence his dissertation on mandates, the successive occupation of the islands by Spain, Germany and Japan, and other problems of state, giving a straightforward account of conditions as they really are, rather than spreading any propaganda and ideas of his own.

His book, too, puts forward the everlasting question, which has become the subject for so many arguments and vital discussions: should perfectly happy native populations, unhampered by conventions, be allowed to continue life as it always has been, or should "civilisation" inflict its blessings on them, forcing them to wear uncomfortable clothes, shut themselves up in schoolrooms and churches, exchange their mud huts with thatched roofs, for stone walls and corrugated iron, and accept an entirely new—and, to them, unnatural—code of life?

Alternated with the more serious chapters there are amusing anecdotes of the uncomfortable experiences of shipwrecked mariners in the past, accounts of fishing and pearl-diving expeditions in the present, and descriptions of eccentric local personalities, amusing customs, and the somewhat unwieldy currency, which, being made of stone, and never smaller than three feet in diameter, can safely be kept in the backyard without fear of it being stolen!

PERDITA PENARTH.

LAT. 83° AND ALL THAT

ARCTIC ADVENTURE. By PETER FREUCHEN. Heinemann. 21s.

NORTH OF NORTH CAPE. By DUDLEY VAIL TALCOTT Bodley Head. 15s.

IT is a pity these books have such Henty titles. For once we feel that, do we not also feel that these authors (or their publishers) are a little conscious of that fact that lat. 85° and all that should appeal to "boys of all ages"? In what does an Arctic differ from an Asiatic adventure—is one to be aware one is having adventures? Surely not, at the time. And afterwards, does one not simply feel, "Life went well then, was then as it should be"? Freuchen's book deserves a better title. He lived his life; he recounts it; it wasn't an "adventure" at the time, but what he found himself doing. Which meant, how he had managed to combine desires and the dictates of circumstances. There are a few heroic moments in his book—but those in his life are so many, it is excusable if he is at least as aware of them as his fellows. There are plates with captions

(—"A boy went out—a man returned") which at first seem to belie simplicity but are really part of it. For Freuchen does far more than blurb-write his life. He recounts that, lived mostly among Eskimos, and in doing so gives a picture of a man who has played a valiant part in Polar history. We recommend reference to Jeanette Mirsky's book for an understanding of the worth of this. Freuchen develops his character whilst keeping the simplicity, or directness, which made him able to respond to a race whose subtle civilisation may one day be our envy. And he is a seaman.

So, too, is Dudley Vail Talcott. But also, one never quite forgets, an American sculptor who grew tired of an American sculptor's life in Paris. So, "mentally happy as a god" but "physically ready to turn inside out," he decided "he wanted air, wanted space," and having "squirmed with excitement over Norway's coastline," went North. He bought the *Nordkap II*, and having "got away from it all" in the North, takes others there. To be exact, he took up expeditions. Gent, with ship, seeks partner in Arctic adventure. Gents, without, came in. Season after season. Or sometimes not. Then the *Nordkap II* had to pay its way, fishing, under its skipper, a grand old character. Sometimes the seasons paid, sometimes not. The author sealed, fished, hunted bear and musk-ox. A good time was had by all, except seal, bear and musk-ox; but, after all, even the Polynesians had to succumb to the white man, and if white men go North, they have to live. This one is no Kent or Freuchen. But his racy account is a more sensible solution for the *malaise de nos jours* than is usually offered by those who can write. And if the North is in danger of becoming to our generation what the South Seas were to Stevenson's, that is to be expected. What, perhaps, may not be, is that a book called in America *Report of the Company* should here be *North of North Cape*. If the first is ambiguous, the second is inaccurate, and I am sure that boys of all ages would be quite content with *Growing up in Greenland* as a title for almost any book about the North.

R. H.

LETTERS AND DIARIES

THE LETTERS OF KING HENRY VIII. Edited by M. ST. CLARE BYRNE. Cassell.
10s. 6d.

THOSE who deny the influence of the individual in history should study the letters of the despot and demagogue whose boast it was that he had made himself Pope and Emperor within his own dominions. The letters of Henry VIII, admirably edited by Miss Byrne, are not easy reading. Tudor eloquence, verbose, long-winded, *ampoulé*, resembles the flights of the adolescent, the proletarian, and Mrs. Amanda M. Ros. Nevertheless, alike in language as in handwriting, each letter bears the stamp of a powerful and distinct personality. The successful dictator should be free from doubt, scruple, self-criticism. Henry VIII was superior to these weaknesses. In 1528, having fallen in love with Anne Boleyn, and desirous of a male successor, he discovered that Katherine, to whom he had been married for nineteen years, had never been his legal wife. While Henry was besieging the Pope for a divorce, his sister, Margaret, had succeeded in annulling her second marriage in order to wed her lover. Outraged at the scandal, the Christian bachelor sends her a sermon, strung with Scriptural quotations, sternly upholding the moral law. Margaret is to remember "the inevitable damnation threatened against adulterers," and to be reconciled to her true married husband, "for during his life ye may have none other by the law of God." If the Scriptures cannot move her, let her think of her child:

"What charge of conscience, what grudging and fretting, yea, what danger of damnation should it be to your soul with perpetual infamy to your renown, sanderously to distain with dishonour so goodly a creature, so vertuous a lady, your natural child procreate in lawful matrimony, as to be reputed baseborn."

Margaret's comments on the status of her niece Mary are not recorded.

If the love-letters to Anne Boleyn are merely business-like, the rebuke to Wolsey and the letters on the Pilgrimage of Grace show a measured dignity rising to grandeur. Henry's loftiest eloquence is inspired by vengeance. There is a terrible majesty about the marshalled phrases, written in his grim, unlovely old age, ordering the burning of Scotland. His terroristic methods, which included the dangling of abbots by long poles from steeples, have an imaginative quality neglected by the modern dictator; but in his ruthlessness and megalomania Henry VIII is thoroughly up-to-date. Miss Byrne's lucid and scholarly commentary throws a searching light on the man who, like his successor to-day, successfully put into practice the precepts of Machiavelli's *Prince*.

OLIVE HESELTINE.

POSTMAN'S HORN. (An Anthology of the Letters of Latter Seventeenth Century England.) By ARTHUR BRYANT. Longmans. 10s. 6d.

ONCE again Mr. Arthur Bryant has undertaken and carried through a particular and difficult piece of intimate research work. It might be said that he has carried it a little too far, worked upon his material rather too much even for the lazy modern reader's taste. The letters he has selected, in themselves, are really astounding and enlightening, bloodcurdling and pretty, and, given that the reader likes letter-reading, would have borne their weight of "bad" spelling easily on their own entertainment value. Mr. Bryant, however, thinks differently, and has translated them into Reading Without Tears, and has thus taken a very great deal of their local colour from them. It would have been nice to come on the word *fashing* and discover proudly for oneself that it meant *fashion*!

The letters he has chosen were written in the latter part of the seventeenth century, and deal chiefly with matters personal to the writers. Affairs of health, heart, service, sport, household and politics, etc., are all there. Advice is freely given, and it is to be wondered if it were always taken: if Edmund Verney, being advised by his father to make his poor mad wife look after more sedulously her house and family as a cure for her insanity, really did so; if Mrs. Legh understood the recipe for puddings which Mrs. Elizabeth Beaumont (1674) so carefully and so wildly wrote down for her, and if all the talk of religion really had any effect.

The collection appears very haphazard, and Mr. Bryant's introductory note at the beginning of each chapter, though helpful, is disturbing, and one cannot help feeling that he would have done better to leave the letters in their raw state—to speak for themselves.

DEAR MISS HEBER. An Eighteenth Century Correspondence. Edited by FRANCIS BAMFORD with Prefaces by GEORGIA and SACHEVERELL SITWELL. Constable. 8s. 6d.

THERE is more method in this collection, edited by Francis Bamford at the request of Mr. and Mrs. Sitwell, and more continuity and therefore more sustained interest, but the material, apart from its romantic setting of bead-feather-and-wool-work in the Sitwell home of Weston in Northamptonshire, is a little frail. The writers, all women of the late Eighteenth Century, certainly come to a sort of nebulous life for us, as we read of their unbelievably limited interests, but it is really the prefaces by Mr. and Mrs. Sitwell which bring the whole into focus. The picture of the eleven large trunks full of letters which had to be gone through to find those suitable for publication is very living and awful, and fills one with all the eavesdropping delight of the confirmed letter-reader. But one cannot help wondering just why Mr. Bamford chose this particular series to give to the public. Was it for their ingenuousness, their emptiness, their pathos, or for the way they illustrate the appalling triviality of outlook, or just for the lavender lives of the ladies of that period?

Miss Iremonger, who seems such a favourite with the collectors, is an airless bore. Mrs Drake, whose finger took so long to heal; Mrs Wrightson, whose obstetric affairs are so freely discussed, and the dashing and sporting Lady Banks, are surely more fun than Miss Iremonger and her bowels and sermons. Miss Heber herself, to whom all the letters are addressed and who is considered as the sort of Good Fairy of Weston, remains a very grey figure far away in the background. It would be nice if one or two of her replies were in existence, but unless other trunkfuls come to light in which some of hers may have rested all this time, she must remain the Ghost of Weston. Mr. Bamford is to be congratulated on his title and for the extraordinary amount of work he has put into the compilation of the book.

M. D. COLE

NO LETTERS FOR THE DEAD. By GALE WILHELM. Lovat Dickson and Peter Davies. 6s.

HARMONY and dissonance of contemporary life and literature are crystallised in this book—a spear-head to the future. No description is adequate and no criticism indicated, for strength, grace and restraint of mood coupled with fine writing make the theme urgent and entire.

One does not say, "read this book because it is interesting, important, a major discovery," although these terms apply. Gale Wilhelm's book has been long anticipated yet never quite realised, for novelists up till now have tried to trace the complex forces of our time in cycles and sagas: fragmentary in their very entirety. She, however, in substituting phrase for symphony has caught leit-motif of our own generation. Read *No Letters for the Dead* if you seek the "here and now."

S. H. DOBSON.

DIARY OF A SOVIET MARRIAGE. By PANTALEIMON ROMANOV. Nott. 2s. 6d.

THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN THE U.S.S.R. By G. N. SEREBRENNIKOV. Gollancz. 7s. 6d.

THE FINAL STRUGGLE: Being Countess Tolstoy's Diary for 1910. Allen and Unwin. 12s. 6d.

IT is scarcely justifiable to call Romanov's very slight work a Diary of a Soviet Marriage (the original title is *Letters of a Woman*, the film *Bed and Sofa* was based on it). It would be more appropriate to call it letters of an aspect of an unsatisfactory marriage, for, in spite of Janko Lavrin's earnest Introduction, these letters might have been written by a modern woman of any nationality. It is nonsense to maintain seriously that "we women often find that love brings in its train a new revelation." (We women often don't.) "For us it is a means of deeper self-knowledge, of development and the highest blossoming of our selves. The man has only one goal, which he longs to reach as quickly as he can—possession." According to this book, which reads like a feminist pamphlet, a woman married cannot achieve happiness unless she breaks away from her husband and stands completely apart, fulfilling her own life and not renouncing her "own life for life with a man." This is exactly the opposite to that at which the U.S.S.R. is aiming; the equality of the sexes, the state in which both men and women are independent, where woman, even when pregnant, is not reliant on her husband (she is given a minimum of sixteen weeks' leave with pay for pregnancy and child-bearing); where there is no pressure whatsoever to continue life together with a man unless she wishes to; where there is, in fact, genuine equality of the sexes in personal civil rights—all this, and an imposing list of facts which the Englishwoman, and particularly the working-class woman, will envy, are given in Serebrennikov's serious work. (Even if some of these things represent aspiration rather than achievement.)

Tolstoy's wife, however, unlike Romanov's Woman, bitterly resents that she has become "unnecessary" to him; it is she who wants to possess him completely: "I feel

that he has taken from me all I have lived by for forty-eight years. I was accustomed to love him, take care of him, and look after his works!" "I have become unnecessary to him. I must create *my own* personal life, or my own *personal death*." This Diary, written during the last year of Tolstoy's life—and on reading it I am not at all surprised that it was his last year—is certainly a necessary book for the Tolstoy student, and, together with the other Diary and the *Position of Women in the U.S.S.R.*, it is a book which women should read.

K. GWENDA DAVID.

MAKERS OF MANY BOOKS

THE HOUSE OF LONGMAN, 1724-1800 By CHARLES JAMES LONGMAN, M.A.

Edited by John E. Chandler Longmans. 30s.

JOHN LANE AND THE NINETIES. By J. LEWIS MAY. (Illustrated.) Lane. 15s.

A PUBLISHER ON BOOK PRODUCTION. (The Sixth Dent Memorial Lecture.)

By RICHARD DE LA MARE. Dent. 1s. 6d.

THE trade of publishing exemplifies the incongruities of our social system—"cultchah" and cash uneasily delivered of *Peg's Paper*. And in the eighteenth century:

"At York and Leeds there were a few (and but very few) good books, but in all other towns between London and Edinburgh nothing but trash was to be found. . . ."

The House of Longman, 1724-1800, is a model to all bibliographers, admirable and painstaking, and though not exactly snappy reading it contains many illuminating and entertaining sidelights on eighteenth-century literature. Mr. C. J. Longman died when he had almost finished his work, and Mr. John E. Chandler undertook its completion, adding a delightful chapter on the eighteenth-century Longmans, which is indeed a history of the book-world of the period. For instance, the father of all Book of the Month Clubs is recorded:

"A number of book clubs are also formed in every part of England . . . to purchase books . . . the books after they have been read by all the subscribers are sold among them to the highest bidders, and the money produced by such sales is expended in fresh purchases, by which prudent and judicious mode each member has it in his power to become possessed of the work of any particular author he may judge deserving a superior degree of attention; and the members at large enjoy the advantage of a continual succession of different publications, instead of being restricted to a repeated perusal of the same authors; which must have been the case if so rational a plan had not been adopted."

There is also a section describing booksellers' signs; for the most part they are in the common currency of present-day inn signs, but one wonders what books were published under the sign of "The Leg and Star."

John Lane published and publicised the nineties, generous yet acquisitive he typified the contradictions that beset the publisher. His attitude to Wilde at the time of the trial could, perhaps, be excused; yet later Wilde's work must have profited the Bodley Head handsomely. Mr. May reminisces kindly, though one suspects the very tip of his tongue is in his cheek; to those for whom "those were the days" a pleasant tingling sensation is assured. But in his charmingly modest preface Mr. May lays claim to very little beyond random recollections bred of long association with Lane. That provincial John Lane should have made good as a "high-class" publisher is as astonishing as any Victorian phenomena, but the how and why has yet to be investigated. The book has some excellent illustrations.

Mr de la Mare's work with Faber and Faber is sufficiently well known to make his contribution to the Dent Memorial Lectures Series worth reading. Though mainly addressed to technicians it is useful that the craft of book-making should receive general attention at a time when books tend to have no more permanence than the sports noon edition. Mr. de la Mare has useful things to say on all the departments of book-making, and his suggestion that certain important passages should not be made too easy to read is admirable. He also has a bad word for the over-elaborate modern wrappers, which, though often successful in themselves, add to the cost unnecessarily, publicity and accuracy lie uneasily together.

D. STURGE MOORE.

LITERARY HISTORY AND CRITICISM

PHOENIX, THE POSTHUMOUS PAPERS OF D. H. LAWRENCE Edited by EDWARD McDONALD. Heinemann. 21s.

D. H. LAWRENCE'S bibliographer has collected together everything that remained of Lawrence's work and arranged it in one huge volume. A third of the material has never before been published, the other two-thirds are reprinted from magazines, prefaces to other people's books and pamphlets. The editor has divided it under seven headings: (1) Nature and Political Pieces. (2) Peoples, Countries, Races (3) Love, Sex, Men and Women. (4) Literature and Art (5) Education (6) Ethics, Psychology, Philosophy. And (7) Personalia and Fragments. Within these groups, he has preserved as strict a chronological order as he can.

These papers cover the whole of Lawrence's writing life. Some are written about his family and the pets they had as children, and these are the most charming; others spring from his travels, his sense of peoples and of countries. Then there are book reviews, many of books already forgotten. But even these reviews are interesting, because when faced with a mediocre book, Lawrence could not leave it alone. It started him off on the creation of theories, which have an interest separable from the book reviewed. It is this quality of giving value even to ephemeral journalism that distinguishes *Phoenix*. Practically all the work printed here was intended not for books, but for magazines. Yet Lawrence has set his imprint as ineffaceably on this as on his graver work.

The philosophical and sexual essays are not so successful as the stories, the superb fragment of an unfinished novel called *The Flying Fish*, the nature pieces, and the literary criticism. His essays on Love and the relations of men and women have "dated." It is likely that they sprang in the first place from particular experience. But whatever their origin, it is certain that they now appear rather bad-tempered and off the mark, whereas the *Letter from Germany*, written in 1924, is to-day even more clearly true under Hitler than it was at the time it was written. *Phoenix* is strongly to be recommended to all who are interested in Lawrence. It shows a greater diversity of subject and of mood than Lawrence is normally credited with: and the biographical passages tend to alter the over-emphasis of *Sons and Lovers* about the relations of his mother and father. Both in *Adolf* and *Rex*, the father comes out a more lovable and sympathetic character than the fussy, harassed mother.

A. CALDER-MARSHALL.

THE SCHOOL OF NIGHT. A study of the Literary Relationships of Sir Walter Raleigh. By M. C. BRADBROOK. Cambridge University Press. 6s.

ALTHOUGH Miss Bradbrook's main objective in the compilation of this short but ample study is the relation of Raleigh to his fellow-minds, she appropriately devotes some careful attention to placing him in clearer perspective as a poet of importance. Rather unjustly perhaps, this very enterprising personality has come to be dismissed as that of a luckless adventurer of the spectacular type, whilst his explorations

in the realm of thought and verse have been altogether disregarded. Miss Bradbrook, at least, makes evident his achievement as one who both enriched the scope of imagery and poetic vocabulary and stood his ground as a bold and vigorous protagonist of the somewhat unorthodox eclecticism peculiar to the age. It is, however, doubtful if her power of persuasion is sufficient to impress the reader of any beside the technical value of the rather withered poems, lost in a vicious circle of ultra-correct sentiment, still less of the carefully moulded prose which no shock could move from its measured course.

The courtly contemplative, however, appears as a far more pleasing person when we come upon him impromptu, away from the shackles of his versification. The existence of a "School of Night," founded by Raleigh and including besides the notorious Marlowe and less confident Chapman, two minor poets and three eccentric noblemen, is one which has met with a steady acceptance since the beginning of this century, and Miss Bradbrook's own thesis is a well-timed development of the tenets advanced by Miss F. A. Yates in her recent *Study of Love's Labour's Lost*. The present author, in fact, goes so far as to identify Raleigh with Armado, and once the hypothesis that it was Shakespeare's motive to assume the villain's counterpart to the inspired separatists is granted, the details appear to assemble themselves without difficulty. The activities of the school comprised far more than aesthetics, and a new type of thought influenced by the mathematician Harriot began to blossom in this Elizabethan Bloomsbury. Its seizing of the relaxations afforded by the reformed doctrine as an opportunity for liberal speculation was an affront to the mystified bigotry of the age, its alleged atheism brought it more than once into disrepute, and only Raleigh's rather ostentatious piety seems to have atoned for his sceptical exuberance. By dint of Miss Bradbrook's analysis of the doctrine of the school and her exegesis of the contributions of its more prominent members, a valuable addition has been made to the elucidation of a critical problem.

TWO PAMPHLETS OF NICHOLAS BRETON. Edited with an introduction and notes by E. G. MORICE, M.A. Arrowsmith (for the University of Bristol). 5s.

NICHOLAS BRETON claims our esteem as a great one among many lesser lights, a wag who wrote poetry to dissipate the humours of those afflicted like himself with Elizabethan *ennui*. These two pamphlets in dialogue form, hitherto inaccessible to the majority, should prove not only stimulating to the specialist, but may serve also as a pleasant aperitif to those unfamiliar with *The Fantasticks* and *The Passionate Shepherd*.

Both pieces are concerned with the problems of the cultivated young man of the period and his perplexity at the contrast between the unscrupulous venality of the competitive world and the Utopian security of Alma Mater. In each the problems are confided to an older person, who, as the questions arise in turn, parries with paternal tolerance. The debates proceed with piquant speed, do fitting justice to Breton's powers of entertainment, and would well repay the consideration of contemporary educationists and economists. *Grimello's Fortunes* is an echo of *The Return from Parnassus*, and is the plant of a young scholar, obsessed with the ideal of honesty, who meets with adversity after adversity in professional life, until he is compelled to resort to menial employment, where he fares even worse. To afford diversion, he breaks now and then into anecdote, and the stories of the Blind and the Lame Man and the Eel and the Magpie have been apparently recast from other sources by the author. *An Old Man's Lesson* consists of a dispute between father and son on the uses of money and the value of travel and scholarship. Pamphilus, diffident in disclosing his desire to obtain the hand of a prepossessing Venetian lady, enters with voluble zest into the discussion and advances his cause by inventing a hypothetical instance. As in the former pamphlet, the catechetical method recurs, and Pamphilus's unflinching repartee confirms him in his parents' good graces. Now and again, Breton lapses into drab sophistry which is, however, outweighed by the warmth and humour which predominate in both narratives.

THOMAS GOOD.

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY AND AFTER

THE OXFORD BOOK OF MODERN VERSE (1892-1935). Chosen by W. B. YEATS.
Clarendon Press. 8s. 6d.

THE POEMS OF SIR WILLIAM WATSON (1878-1935). Harrap. 7s. 6d.

FULLNESS of time may reveal the reason why the twentieth century, of all, thought itself "modern." Enlightened men may then see in its sad use of that term of limitation something of the awareness of a gap, of failure to combine past with future, which is also illustrated by the contemporary fondness for the phrase "affaire," veiling what it stands between—love and lechery.

Till then we may observe that this century exists between the nineteenth and the twenty-first, and remark, perhaps more pertinently, that Yeats' anthology, though necessarily nearer the former than the latter, seems in some quarters to have been unnecessarily maligned. No doubt there were high expectations, no doubt they have not been entirely fulfilled—but what anthology ever could be "modern," unless it were one that contained all poetry that lives? It is a pity that the Oxford Press did not follow on their books of sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth century verse, with one of the twentieth—but the twentieth is not yet four decades old. Granted the anthology, at least let us acknowledge that it is called "of *Verse*," which explains some of its contents as fittingly as has the same word those of its predecessors. Let us also answer those who criticise the amount of Irish or of translations from Indian languages by recalling that at no point is the book called "of *English* verse." Tagore is thus included, and Ezra Pound, who is (rightly) not considered American. Robert Frost is omitted.

But omissions—that way, as Lear might have said had there been traffic lights at Dover, that way danger lies. Omissions are many—Wilfrid Owen and Rosenberg being notable (Yeats has "a distaste for certain poems written in the midst of the Great War"). Edward Thomas is represented by one piece, not his best; a decision that should be hard to reach is more becoming if less definite. My own preferences from Monro, Flecker, de la Mare, and Binyon are not represented, that was not Yeats' aim; but a reviewer has a right to suggest that some works exemplify a poet at his best, others at his most typical, and there are many here whose representation comes into neither category.

There is, however, plenty of opportunity to renew acquaintance not only with much that was in the Oxford Book of Victorian verse, but also with Q's original oddity. How gay to re-read Newbolt (*Drake, he's in his hammock*) and *Cargoes*; Lionel Johnson (but not Davidson), Wilfrid Gibson, J. M. Synge, Arthur Symonds, and the rest. By the time one has reached Francis Thompson, one is sighing for Swinburne—surely "modern" enough to be preached against on the radio—and lest we wonder if anything has happened since then, we may discover that, without our noticing it, Dorothy Wellesley and W. J. Turner have become important poets. Some readers may feel one nip of Frost is worth the magnums Yeats gives us of these. But still it is nice to know his opinion. Nice, too, to meet Pater again and to find that the "D"s consist of Davies (W. H.), Davison (Edward), de la Mare (Walter), Dowson (Ernest), and—yes, Drinkwater (John). It should be added that there is a selection from younger poets, many of whom have yet to prove their claim to that title; among these, Dylan Thomas is not included. But Kipling is in earlier pages, and Oscar Wilde is there, and so also is Housman.

It is a pity that Housman could not have been accompanied by Barrie and William Watson. Thus would the three weird sisters of our fathers' early middle age have played their part. But Yeats did not print Barrie's prose as verse, and William Watson's work was too expensive, "even for an anthologist with the ample means of the Oxford University Press at his disposal." So it is with pleasure that I find I have been sent the latter's verse from another firm.

At the same time, another than I should review it—one of those who regard that rewarding half-way quality, "bitterness," as the final human virtue, and then trick it out

with tags, till one longs to cry "tartness for tarts' sake." Let such a one come on these poems, and we had best prepare for a revival. William Watson, latterly neglected, would be rediscovered were one of our best "bitter-sweet" critics to come on such lines as:

"One boon of Fortune I implore,
With one petition kneel;
*At least caress me not before
Thou break me on the wheel."*

Take that most generally printed lyric, *April*. How happy could we be, were we but able to point out that "April," symbol of inconstancy, is *repeated*—what uncertainty, what comment on human life that the poet, having mentioned the most inconstant thing, summons next to it no consolation such as June, but is reminded again of—his "bitterness"! And "girlish"—to appreciate the solemnity of that, we would need only quote from our references "uncertain, coy, and hard to please"; then could we see to it that this lyric, too, were cross-filed with middle Shakespeare, Donne, Ford, as well as such occasionally dejected romantics as Housman, Brooke, and de la Mare. Even the lines "*With one wise friend or one Better than wise, being fair*" can be seen as the cry of disillusion. For, of course, it can be taken as no compliment to be fair; it can only be seen that the fair is never the wise, and, refusing ugliness, one has only the choice of—second-best.

Which, indeed, most of our bitter-sweet school have never shown themselves backward in taking. I mean no disrespect to Sir William; it grieves me that others should be exalted at his expense. He was of the nineties, the period of disillusion, and the relicts of that era should rally round—as I feel they would do, were many of his lines reprinted under a less accepted name. For bitterness, these thirty-four-year-old lines to Italy might be remembered:

"Imperial Power, that hungerest for the globe,
Restrain thy conquering feet,
Lest the same Fates that spun thy purple robe
Should weave thy winding-sheet."

And, I am tempted to ask, "how about" these, "on excessive deference to foreign literary opinion" (1889):

"The prize of lyric victory who shall gain,
If ours be not the laurel, ours the palm?"

I would recommend both critics and poets to read the sonnets on Gladstone, on America's non-intervention in 1914, I would ask them, in view of recent activities, to remark these lines on "the church to-day" (1908):

"Outwardly splendid as of old—
Inwardly sparkless, void and cold—
Her force and fire still spent and gone—
Like the dead moon, she still shines on."

Then I would ask them why it is Sir William himself had to complain of neglect? He was of his time, as topical as are ours to-day—for Abdul Hamid and Gladstone, substitute whom you like as easily as you do daggers in Elizabethan verse for dope to-day. Much of what he wrote has, as I show, again become topical; it might have been written for a weekly by either a young poet or one of the critics who dislikes them. Sir William, too, had his own views on rhyme; "orchard" went with "tortured," and "callous" with "palace" (which would get a laugh on an Auden night at the Westminster). To-day's writers "enlarge the English language" when they do that. Sir William is neglected, both by them and the bitter-sweets. Lest the reason should be thought to be that Sir William was musical, it can be denied; that he was easy to read is refuted by

"Glorious Sir Walter, Shakespeare's brother-brain,
Fortune's unvanquishable victim, Scott,
Mere lettered fame, 'tis said, esteeming not,
Save as it ministered to weightier gain,
Had yet his roseate dream, though dreamed in vain:"

By the time, buoyed up by the hope of a full-stop, I have reached that cheating colon, I feel I have either been listening to a B.B.C. New Year programme or had an unusually cut-in-on-'phone conversation, which is much the same thing. But I confessed that I was not the man for Sir William. It needs a bitterer, or it needs my betters, the younger. I remain bewildered why they themselves do not see it. For who am I to suggest to the one why he was forgotten or to warn the others to mend their ways, lest they be—before an addition to the Oxford Book of almost any kind of verse be even thought of?

TREVOR JAMES.

THREE VICTORIAN VOLUMES

THE ARABIAN KNIGHT. By SETON DEARDEN. Barker. 12s. 6d.

MISS WEETON. Edited by EDWARD HALL. Oxford University Press, Humphrey Milford. 12s. 6d.

VICTORIAN ENGLAND. Portrait of an Age. By G. M. YOUNG. Oxford University Press, Humphrey Milford. 7s. 6d.

THERE is a quarter of a century in time, but little difference in spirit, between Miss Weeton, working all day in her school, half-starved and without the pence to buy a poultice for her ulcered leg, and Burton, roaming through Sind, disguised as a beggar or a dervish. The society of the age judged both with equal severity; the one for a single error of judgment, when she exchanged the tribulations of her poorly-paid life as governess, for marriage with a man who was a sadist and a fool; the other, because he obtained, at Napier's own request, a report upon the underworld of Karachi. The real creators of our own age, that in spite of war and unemployment has begun to think in terms of social insurance and collective responsibility, were men and women who lived against the stream of their own period, and were unknown, feared, or even disgraced. The judgments of fifty years ago may still be read in our text-books. Every schoolgirl has heard of Tennyson, few of William Morris. Burton is a name for the few, although, like another unpopular traveller, Doughty, it is said that his observations on the trade routes in Central Africa were used during the last war on account of their reliability.

Undoubtedly the most interesting material of these three volumes is contained in *The Arabian Knight*. Some of us have read and respected Burton more than any other traveller of his century, but the majority of people think, if they remember him, only of his journey to Mecca. Actually, his expedition to Harar, his journey into Central Africa, and his many adventures, during his seven years of disguise and study in India, are possibly more important contributions to science and to history. He was a link between eighteenth-century India, almost unchanged since Marco Polo, and the clerks of the nineteenth, who found it merely a hot land where no primroses grew, where they chattered of leave, social position and eventual return to England. If Burton had been born thirty years sooner, he would have been ruler of a state. As it was, he was discarded after nineteen years of service, without pension or thanks.

It is unfortunate that though Mr. Dearden gives us an impartial and concise account of the main events of a crowded life, particularly with regard to Speke and the dismissal from Damascus, his book is placid and devoid of enthusiasm. The present reviewer read Lady Burton's biography at the age of nine, with the result that, believing the study of languages to be a passport to adventure, many hours were spent in later life as temporary interpreter, guiding elderly spinsters between custom houses and trains. In spite of its faults of chaotic thinking and exuberance, apparent even to a child, Lady Burton quoted from Burton's journals, and gave something of the vitality of the man.

It is easily understood that Burton must have been unpopular with his contemporaries. He would obviously to-day have been with the left, with his indifference to class distinctions, and his sense of justice. Mr. Dearden might well have added a further chapter and dealt with the relationship between the economic policy of the Foreign Office and its influence upon Burton's career.

Miss Weeton to-day would be a best-seller. Born a century too soon, she had largely to be her own audience. It is a bleak but true picture she gives in her letters of an England still at war with Napoleon, though such were the conditions of her life that she mentions him only once. In these days, when progress is questioned, it is good to note what has been accomplished in a century, largely through the efforts of unknown workers, such as this little governess was. She was cut off from intellectual society, had few books and little leisure to read, yet her journals are modern in expression, vivid in their portrayal of employers, maids and friends, entirely free from copy-book moral sentences. It is a valuable volume, not only for all those interested in the evolution of women's education, but for the general reader and the historical student.

The work of Mr. G. M. Young on the Victorian age is widely known, and this brief summary of the period is valuable for reference. The chronological table giving the chief events, books, and the main intellectual influences of each year, are particularly helpful. The year of Miss Weeton's death is not known, but is thought to have been about 1850, perhaps the same year that Wordsworth died, and just before Burton made his pilgrimage to Mecca. Apart from the summary, the book is written from the point of view of the academic historian, it records certain facts, disregards others that we should to-day consider of more importance. There is little mention, for instance, of the appalling conditions against which the workers struggled. After the colour of the mere facts in Miss Weeton's life, liable to instant dismissal by drunken employers, it is difficult to concentrate upon pages that scarcely record the virtual slavery of many classes of the community, particularly women and children, during the nineteenth century.

These books fit only chronologically together, but each adds something more to the composite picture of Victorian England.

ERNEST HUDSON.

DRAMATIC LITERATURE

EARLY VICTORIAN DRAMA, 1830-1870. By ERNEST REYNOLDS. Heffer, Cambridge. 6s.

THE ENGLISH THEATRE. By ALLARDYCE NICOLL. Nelson. 6s.

THE little-studied period in English drama of which Ernest Reynolds writes was not undistinguished. One W. B. Barnard wrote one hundred and fourteen plays, many of which have never been printed. Jerrold was able to call a piece *Fifteen Years of a Drunkard's Life*, and a stage direction could run *Tom receives Biddy in his arms—Trevanion regards the body of Anne in dumb amazement—General picture of grief and consternation*. Faced with this, and much other wealth, Ernest Reynolds complains that the period was "barren." It was—in what he was seeking: signs of a Sheridan, a Tchekov, an Ibsen. That, in a sense, is the point. One can either relate the vulgarity and rapidity to the life of the time, which the limits of his book prevent him from doing; or one can take pleasure in the fact that it occurred to people to write and deliver such lines as:

"Editha, is it thou?—so fair and lovely—

Aside, stern king!—despite thy ghastly brow

Thou part us not again. Away! She's mine!

I hold her in these arms!—ha, ha!—ha, ha!

She's mine! She's mine, mine!—Editha! cold, cold, dead!"

and from this Mr. Reynolds is forbidden by his temper. He is so concerned with what is not in the drama of the time that he misses much of the flavour of what, so surprisingly,

was there. But he has assembled much curious information; he has filled in a gap in the history of the English theatre, for which lovers of the "paper drama" should be particularly grateful, and though the full history, taking into account playgoers and playhouses as well as plays and players, is still to be written, Mr. Reynolds makes a useful prologue. If my applause seem lukewarm, it is because his lack of humour makes him speak a little in the accent of Allardyce Nicoll.

As to that one, whom among dramatic historians one is tempted to call "the old original," what is there to say but that his latest addition to an impressive record of devotion to the theatre is "typical"? He would bid fair to become the Saintsbury of the stage, were it not that Saintsbury never played safe. Professor Nicoll, encumbered with qualifying clauses, usually does. He could, I feel, write of a music-hall as if it were a mausoleum. But we know that by now; we know that his style is apparently set, and though we may regret the lack of entertainment it offers, we can continue to be grateful for the instruction he provides.

H. K. FISHER.

ART

A SCULPTOR'S ODYSSEY. By MALVINA HOFFMAN. Scribner, London. 24s.

THE Field Museum of Chicago noticed that while the snake and monkey houses were crowded, few troubled to visit the anthropological rooms of a museum. The reason was that monkeys climbed and were alert, whereas the usual row of rather dusty cases depressed the average visitor and drove him away. They proposed to Miss Hoffman, therefore, that she fill a hall with sculptures, to be made as life-like as possible, to illustrate the races of mankind.

At first, Miss Hoffman would not agree to their proposals and plans and counter-plans were discussed and rejected. Finally, a project of her own was accepted, and she spent several years in continuous travel, to sketch and model in their own environment different racial types, from Bushman to Negro, from Solomon Islander to Indian, till the Hall of Man in Chicago was filled with over 101 portraits of individuals, representing the basic divisions of the human races.

Although this volume is primarily a description of the author's travels, it is as well a record of her life. She grew up in a New York it is now hard to imagine, went to Paris, and became one of the first woman sculptors to study anatomy. Her account of her first meeting with Rodin is particularly delightful, when he advised her to study and to eat plenty of steak and potatoes; and her pages on the declaration of war, with Rodin's prophecy that it was the finish of one epoch of civilisation, are of great interest. There is, as well, an exciting chapter upon the carving of marble, and the methods of casting plaster figures in bronze.

There are many illustrations, and though it is hard to judge of Miss Hoffman's work from photographs, the Field Museum must have attracted many visitors to the study of the different races of the world.

LAMBERT STONE.

THE CLEAR MIRROR. By EVELYN HUTCHISON. Cambridge University Press. 8s. 6d.

THE clear, limpid prose of this book seeps into the blood so that you feel the colours of the patterns it describes, in all their subtle dispositions, and with all the subliminal associations of the looker-on, whether they be medallions of the Virgin, or Tibetan paintings.

"... as the tropical night so quickly approaches, these dreams must fade. The fish in the circumambient ocean slough off the picturesque skins that the medieval artists fashioned for them, and take on their natural shapes. Rapidly their forms pass through centuries of knowledge until the time when Block published his great monument of

zoological iconography, and when they became related scale to scale, fin ray to fin ray, with the fish of the mind. Then the water darkens; the superb colour of Block's pages are hidden. All the learning, all the knowledge, that man has sought out, seem to have stolen with the dying sun into the deserts of Arabia. . . ."

This intuitive interpretation is not archaeology, nor the soporific meandering of a Pater or a Symonds, but rather the intellectual awareness by a very sensitive man of certain miscellaneous pictures of the Christian saints in Goa, and of the esoteric art of Tibet in the light of the social and psychological influences which brought them about.

I do not thereby mean to suggest that here is a self-conscious Marxist interpretation of European influence on Asiatic art. But Mr. Hutchison's book is a model of the social criticism of art in so far as it is deeply informed by the social origin of art influences, and has coherently blended rationality with the changing colours of the palette, and it does not strut or posture or flourish ready-made formulae across its pages to obtain instantaneous effects. I do not know how far Mr. Hutchison is really conscious of what he has done, although I believe his whole method implies awareness.

A book like this makes one wish for quiet hours, for loneliness, for brief moments in which to take in the grey-blues, the pale-greys, the mauves and the reds of its pictures, in which to revitalise one's instincts, so that in tubes and on the tops of buses the hard deadness of others does not throttle one's living impulse.

MULK RAJ ANAND.

SELECTED BOOKS

PRELUDE TO CHEMISTRY. By JOHN READ, F.R.S. Bell. 12s. 6d.

ALCHEMY, the divine art, is a subject few modern scientists deign to study, yet Professor Read, in his latest book, *Prelude to Chemistry*, has made the theme absorbingly interesting.

Formerly, the alchemist was poet, philosopher and medical writer, compiling manuscripts, evolving prescriptions and drawing the most intricate and magnificent charts. Thus, while in the oldest book in the world, written fifteen hundred years B.C., there were remedies to prevent hair turning grey and to cure indigestion, there was also data of intense scientific and literary interest: minerals such as sulphur, soda, lapis lazuli, and saltpetre were in use, and there were a number of recipes dealing with the preparation of metals and alloys stimulating gold and precious jewels.

No one can fail to find some field of interest in this book, which ranges from the Philosopher's Stone to Noah's Ark by way of the Tree of Life, Sun-worship and the Goose of Hermogenes. The pictures, selected from rare books and manuscripts, are wonderfully revealing, and an appendix on the music in Atlanta Fugiens should be studied by the sombre students in our arid though up-to-date laboratories. Symbols as well as systems, and facts instead of formulae!

S. H. DOBSON.

THE LITTLE CHIMNEY SWEEP. By ERIC WALTER WHITE, after the Silhouette Film by Lotte Reiniger. White and White, Bristol. 7s. 6d.

FILM directors are not always lucky in their chroniclers; it is therefore fortunate that Lotte Reiniger's work should have been recorded in illustrated book-form, first with *Achmed* (Wasmuth, Berlin, 1926), then with Eric White's *Walking Shadows*. The same author now tells both the tale and the story of the making of Lotte Reiniger's *Papageno*, of which I have already expressed my pleased opinion. There is thus little to be said of the book save what should be enough—that it follows in words the gaiety of the scissor-cuts, more than twelve of which are reproduced. Two of these, it should be added, are now in the Victoria and Albert Museum. The introduction is full of illuminating facts concerning the coalescing of the various factors—music, scenario,

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"period"—of this artist's seventeenth film, and if the gaiety of her medium leave any doubt of her sincerity as an artist, it need only be recorded again that she is one of the few working in film who realise that in the eighteenth century, eighteenth-century houses were not antique. (Korda has hired genuine Elizabethan stuff for his film of that queen, which she herself would probably think wilfully shabby and dirty.) Lotte Reiniger also remembers that, oddly enough, Georgian London had rather more houses that were not Georgian than were; it seems kind of unfair that she should give us this without benefit of publicised studios, "historical experts" and what-not. But this book, which shows she does, is in content, as well as format, an augury for a new firm which we can only hope will be lucky.

R. H.

PHOTOGRAPHY. By C. E. K. Mees. Bell. 7s. 6d.

THE director of Kodak Research speaks, in his portmanteau book, of the history of photography, the manufacture of photo materials, colour photography, kinematography, sound photography, animated cartoon work, etc. The trouble is that Mr. Mees "speaks"; for the volume is founded on Christmas lectures given at the Royal Institution for young people. Chapters have the appeal of the lecture—that is, they describe somebody doing something; rather than tell the reader, as does the usual text-book, how to do something. As a Royal Institute lecturer, Mr. Mees is at his best when he is treating the applied chemistry of photography or the principles of physical optics. But because the book does not, at any point, become a practical manual, we feel that the public for *Photography* will unfortunately be limited.

However, there is a lot of useful information in Mr. Mees' asides. The storage space of newspapers in film form is less than one-fiftieth of that required for originals. Sir William Higgins, the great astronomer, made a single plate (four by five inches in size) last for a year, cutting it up into narrow strips, each of which was exposed for several weeks. And old Burgundy makes a developer.

O. B.

ACCIDENTS AND THEIR PREVENTION. By H. M. VERNON. Cambridge University Press. 15s.

THAT accidents should exercise a peculiar fascination over the public is perhaps not strange, since they are thought to be events which no man can predict, but it is odd that the scientific analysis of accidents should be of such comparatively recent date. The change in attitude towards them is due to the great development in the present generation of two modes of thinking which do not appear to bear any relation to one another. The first is the increasing use of the conception of *probability*, the second is the increasing understanding of the part played by *unconscious factors* in the mind. The former represents an impersonal, the latter a personal, attitude towards events; and these two modes of attack on the problem are undermining the strong tendency to believe that our lives (and deaths) are determined by forces over which we have no control and are strengthening the belief in what is called the Reign of Law.

This book is concerned with the impersonal aspect of the problem, and is in the main devoted to collecting the facts on which, and only on which, a proper understanding can be based. The facts are astonishing; in Great Britain alone the number of accidents of sufficient seriousness to be reckoned amounts to fifty million every year *not counting road accidents*, and the cost, again excluding the road, probably runs to at least thirty million pounds. But this is not the end of the story; the loss to the individuals, their families and the community, in money, material comfort and sense of security is, in so far as it is measurable, very much greater.

In addition to collecting a prodigious amount of material the author shows the way to analyse the factors which combine to produce these results. He draws inferences and

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JOHN RICKMAN.

WHY AEROPLANES FLY. By ARTHUR ELTON and ROBERT FAIRTHORNE. Longmans, Green and Co. 2s. 6d.

EVERYONE agrees that the advance of knowledge can only be achieved by two parallel processes. One demands the creative faculty, the inventive brain. The other calls for the technique of conveying to the larger public these new advances. The first is a rare gift, its possessors are men of genius; the second is a craft, which geniuses can sometimes learn, but which is often practised more successfully by trained craftsmen—educators, publicists, propagandists.

This book is the first of a series which will attempt to explain as simply as possible the mechanism of modern inventions—aeroplanes, television sets, etc. It owes much to the experience already gained in the making of documentary films. On the whole, it is very good, though I suspect that it slightly under-estimates the intelligence of its readers in the text, and slightly over-estimates their capacity for reading three-dimensional figures. It is surprising how much of an aeroplane's design and construction one takes for granted.

The production—and, of course, the photographs are excellent. Even its moderate price is probably beyond the reach of most workers, but it is to be hoped that it will be stocked by all libraries, and will thus play its part in the education of the whole country.

JOHN MADGE.

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT? By ALDOUS HUXLEY. Chatto and Windus. 3d.

WE'RE NOT GOING TO DO NOTHING. By C. DAY LEWIS. Left Review. 6d.

ON INSANITY. By LEO TOLSTOY. C. W. Daniel Co. 1s.

MR. HUXLEY'S pamphlet was published nearly a year ago. It was well timed to catch that general feeling of helplessness which followed the breakdown of Abyssinian resistance and Hitler's more recent coups. It was well directed to overcome the common-sense, everyday objections of the ordinary reader by a barrage of information, often somewhat irrelevant and, by a firm use of analogy, often definitely misleading. On the other hand, it cannot be so easily dismissed, for it is an important event when an artist of the standing of Mr. Huxley, who has previously maintained a marvellously superhuman attitude to the life and social problems of the world outside the circle of his own experience, finally turns his mind to the solution of political questions. And it is well worth while to examine the solution which he puts forward, and to extract from it anything which promises to be of value. Unfortunately, Mr. Huxley's remedy seems to me to be nothing short of suicidal. I have no opportunity here to analyse it in its entirety, but I should like to give a quotation which seems to me to contain the root of his argument.

"From this description of non-violence it must be fairly obvious that non-violent resistance cannot be used to any considerable extent in modern war, which is waged almost exclusively by means of long-range weapons inflicting indiscriminate destruction. Once war has broken out, pacifists are almost helpless. Therefore it must be prevented

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from breaking out. But it can only be prevented from breaking out if at least one government of an important sovereign state chooses to act pacifistically towards its neighbours. The practical task before pacifists in this country is to persuade the government to act pacifistically towards other governments. In later sections we shall discuss, first, the sort of policy that a government determined to prevent an outbreak of war should pursue; second, the means by which individual pacifists should seek to induce their government to adopt such a policy."

His answer to the first is that the government should call a conference to redistribute the supplies of raw materials to suit the convenience of the aggressive powers; and to the second, that individual constructive pacifists should devote their energies to persuading their governments to adopt this policy. And, meanwhile, Abyssinia and China and Spain, and then the rest of the democratic world, must content themselves passively to await the firm, if necessary brutal and forceful, request of the expansionist powers, and pacifically to accept their terms; knowing, too, that "once war has broken out, pacifists are almost helpless." What a prospect!

The pamphlet, *We're not going to do nothing*, by Mr. Day Lewis is intended as a direct answer to the questions which Mr. Huxley has brought up. It suffers from the fault of appearing a trifle incoherent and, at the same time, superficial. Mr. Day Lewis gives the impression of having attempted to attack Mr. Huxley in his own country, and this is a difficult feat when the territory is an imaginary one. Of course, his case, in so far as it is a real one, is an unassailable answer to Mr. Huxley's theorising. But a still better case can be made on the immediate grounds of practical expediency. There can remain no doubt at all that the practice of pacifism, in England no less than in France, is playing into the hands of the potential aggressors. In spite of this criticism, it is fair to say that no one who has read and been impressed by Huxley's pamphlet can afford to ignore Day Lewis's retaliation.

I have grouped with these two a translation of an article by Leo Tolstoy *On Insanity*. This was written in 1910, the year he died. It seems to me to be a not very important document. The foreword suggests that Tolstoy was really an anarchist, but not, however, in the sense of a political reformer. Tolstoy possessed a tremendous sensibility, and enormous faith in humanity. But he grew too horrified to tolerate them close to him. Huxley uses a description of the "State" which passes as a hazy version of Lenin's own definition. Tolstoy didn't like the thing, and so succeeded in ignoring it; but this only at the expense of losing touch with politics in its widest sense. He saw insanity everywhere. in the suicide rate, in the conceptions of "state" accepted unthinkingly by the Press and the public, and in the universal amorality more suitable for dreams than for waking life. It is silly, but irresistible, to speculate on what Tolstoy would do if he were alive to-day. The answer surely is that he would approve, but hardly himself take part in, the programme of the constructive pacifists.

JOHN MADGE.

THE LIFE OF GEORGE MOORE. By JOSEPH HONE. Gollancz. 15s.

GEORGE MOORE, after emerging from Naturalism and the 'Nineties, survived his earlier failures and successes to settle down at the age of fifty as a sort of St. Simon Stylites of literature. The critics range themselves in two camps

Into controversy his latest and authentic biographer does not seem disposed to enter. Not that Mr. Joseph Hone ignores the issue entirely. Very sensibly, as one soon discovers after a few pages, he refrains from provocative comment on the many contradictory and confusing traits in Moore's character. One frequently suspects, however, a chuckle of confidence behind the lines, that here is one more bombshell to confound the adversaries.

A certain un-Englishness, not always detected as such, very largely accounts for Moore's unpopularity. The sensualist philosophy of *Memoirs of my Dead Life*, the concern with the processes and paradoxes of religious psychology as in *The Lake* and *Evelyn Innes* are far more suggestive of France than of England. On the other hand, the love of apocryphal reminiscence and protracted reverie are indubitable marks of the intractable Irishman.

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On the whole of his work is the impress of this hybrid quality and on account of it there is every likelihood that he will continue to be misunderstood by Englishmen. Even in the specifically critical estimate of Mr. Shawe-Taylor due elucidation of this important point is wanting. Mr. Hone's more intimate picture also becomes similarly limited, the bisection of a personality on the Irish side rather than a complete view of the man and his work.

What does become pre-eminently clear from the book, however, is the enormous expenditure of enterprise and zealous labour which George Moore, in spite of a restricted field, lavished upon his novels. Less pleasant to some ears perhaps will be Mr. Hone's abundant confirmation of the exasperating quixotry which made Moore a difficult friend and an insignificant enemy.

THOMAS GOOD.

NO ESCAPE. By RANDALL SWINGLER. Chatto and Windus. 7s. 6d.

RANDALL SWINGLER'S first novel is the story of Rolf Taverner and Sonia Maturin. Rolf is the son of a vicar, Sonia the illegitimate daughter of a Russian ballet dancer and a Mr. Earle, the anæmic grandson of a Transport Lord, living at the big house in the Vicar's village. Mr. Earle has two sons, Hugh and Alan, aged eleven and thirteen, whom Rolf is employed to tutor. Rolf and Sonia fall in love, and when Mr. Earle dies, leaving his country house to his nurse, Sonia and Rolf flee to Paris and get married. Marriage resolves the indecision in Rolf, who has thrown up a job in a bank before the beginning of the book. He has now something to work for. He takes up his job again and the two set to creating a home. The war breaks out. And though he tries to ignore it, Rolf is at last forced into the position of going to the front, not because he believes in the war, but because he must follow those less fortunate than himself who are being driven to fight. At the front he distributes copies of the Communist Manifesto to soldiers in his platoon. He is not court-martialled, because his division is just going into action. But his officer is told that it would be better if he didn't return. He is killed, though it is not certain whether by the enemy or by his commander. Sonia is left, without a husband. But she has a child in her; and the book closes with her giving birth to this child, the new hope for the next generation.

Swingler is a communist; and he approaches the novel with a definite political purpose. He wishes to show in the course of his novel, the latent class struggle, the waste, cruelty and horror of capitalism and the solution which rests in socialism. The task he has set himself is not easy, since in such a novel lack of actuality in characterisation or in situation repudiates the general thesis of which the novel is meant to be a particular example. In some incidents the author is triumphantly successful. The relation of Alan and Hugh to one another, and their reactions to the village children who steal Hugh's clothes while he is bathing are portrayed with sensitiveness and subtlety. The home of the Haggy family, the characters of Rolf's mother, Mr. Earle, Mrs. Wheatley, and the Vicar himself are clearly analysed.

Rolf himself, perhaps because he is too close to the author, is a rather subjective creation. Sonia is shadowy and romanticised. (In a stuffy county family, before the war, she uses lipstick at the age of seventeen, has short hair and short dresses. She is never seen in relation to the rest of the Earle family, except to the two children: and when she is with them, she knows no sign of her vagabond, Continental upbringing, but is for all the world like a pleasant, sensitive English girl.) The cards are stacked against capitalism. Mr. Earle's nephew, who acts as agent for the estate, is a penny plain villain; and the gamekeeper is twopence coloured. For this reason, the eviction of the Haggy's loses its dramatic quality, because one feels that it is engineered, just to show how rotten capitalism is. The indignation meeting at the pub has the same unreal quality.

But *No Escape* is a book worth reading, if only for individual scenes and passages of beauty. But it is also a book which makes me keen to see what its author writes next, because it is obvious that as soon as Swingler has mastered the technique of his medium, he will be able to treat with confidence situations which have defeated him in this book.

A. CALDER-MARSHALL.

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LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY

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Cover Design by Kenneth Macpherson

Paris Correspondent—Sylvia Beach. Prague Correspondent—H. T. Olden. New York Correspondent—Kenneth Macpherson American Representative—T. C. Wilson. *The Editor is glad to consider manuscripts and will be grateful to those authors who save secretarial side-tracking by enclosing addressed envelopes as well as stamps. Unsolicited contributions accompanied by neither will not be returned.*

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- "Livelier and better balanced this quarter."—*Manchester Evening News*.
- "Dr. Hock's article (*Theatre and Drama in Wales*) raises all sorts of questions. Some remarks very flattering to the Welsh and some not quite so flattering."—*Western Mail*.
- "The tale by Dylan Thomas, which is characteristically full of poetic imagery of a curious deliberateness, is possibly the freshest."—*Times Literary Supplement*.
- "The News Reel of this stimulating quarterly contains just enough piquancy to make for entertaining reading."—*Newcastle Weekly Chronicle*.
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SOME PREVIOUS NOTICES

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- "Full of excellent things."—*New Statesman and Nation*.
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- "Very good quality . . . a strong appeal to the cultured reader."—*Morning Post*.
- "The volumes of this magazine ought to be in all the major libraries in the country."—*Visir* (Iceland).
- "Contains some of the best literary discussions, stories, and articles of to-day."—*Story* (U.S.A.).
- "Much fascinating reading."—*Northern Echo*.
- "Exceptionally interesting and valuable."—*Manchester Despatch*.
- "Worthy of preservation."—*Sussex Express*.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

THOMAS MANN allowed us his contribution from a pamphlet published by the Sozialistische Frauenverband der Schweiz. He has just returned from U.S.A., where he delivered three lectures on Goethe, Tolstoi, and Wagner at the University in Exile, affiliated with the New York New School for Social Research. He is now engaged on a short novel, *Lotte in Weimar*.

MELITTA SCHMIDEBERG, M.D., Berlin, has lived in England since 1930 and is a Physician of the Institute of Psycho-analysis, London. Her main interests are sociology and criminology, child-psychology, and the application of psycho-analysis to education; she has published numerous articles in various scientific journals.

LOUIS GUILLOUX, now one of France's leading young writers, made his début in 1927 with an autobiography, *La Maison du Peuple*. Since then he has published four novels (*Dossier Confidentiel*, *Hyménée*, *Angelina*, and *Le Sang Noir*) and two collections of stories and essays, *Compagnons* and *Histoires de Brigands*, which are marked by an individual blend of irony and lyricism, combined with a remarkable feeling for the sorrows of humanity.

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS, for many years physician at Rutherford, New Jersey, will be familiar to all readers of modern poetry since the publication of *Poems*, 1909 and his appearance in the first Imagist anthology (1913). He has contributed to almost every review of standing and his books include *The Tempers* (1913), *Al Que Quieve* (1917), *Kora in Hell* (1920), and *Sour Grapes* (1921).

CHARLES HENRI FORD, born in Mississippi, was editor of the review, *Blues*. His latest book is *A Pamphlet of Sonnets* (Caravel Press, 1936).

KEN ETHERIDGE, twenty-five, writes from South Wales, "at present partially employed." He spends his spare time writing and producing his own plays with the Cymric Players, a small company collected and trained by himself. His one-act play, *Underground*, was last year awarded the prize by the British Drama League for the best play by a new author. He has printed a few short stories, and is now working on a four-act play of modern mining life.

JEAN CASSOU was born in 1897 in Bilbao. He has written in, and translated from, Spanish, which is almost as much his native language as French. Among several books of criticism on historical, literary, and artistic subjects are *La Vie de Philippe II*, 1929; *Les Nuits de Musset*, 1930; *Marcoussis*, 1930; *Grandeur et Infamie de Tolstoi*, 1932,

and the latest of his novels is *Les Massacres de Paris* (1935). Keenly interested in politics, Cassou, besides being literary critic of *Les Nouvelles Littéraires*, contributes to *Vendredi* and holds an important position on *Ce Soir*, a new evening paper with Left sympathies.

FRANZ KAFKA, who died in 1924, has been translated into English with *The Castle* and *The Great Wall of China*, and the Parton Press issued *The Metamorphosis* last month.

SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER, daughter of George Townsend Warner, the historian, was educated as a musician. Her publications include poetry (*The Espalier*, *Time Importuned*, *Opus 7*, and, jointly with Valentine Ackland, *Whether a Dove or Seagull*), novels (*Lolly Willowes*, *Mr. Fortune's Maggot*, *The True Heart*, *Summer Will Show*), and short stories (*The Salutation*, *More Joy In Heaven*). She was in Barcelona last autumn.

NATHAN ASCH, author of *Be Careful*, *Mrs. Hopkins* in our second number, was born in 1902, in Warsaw. His latest book *The Road : In Search of America*, was published in America this spring ; and he is the author of four other novels which have been translated into Polish, French, Spanish, Swedish, Finnish, Yiddish, Hebrew, Hungarian, and German.

JAMES FEIBLEMAN, born thirty-three years ago in New Orleans, has published a book of poems, *Death of the God in Mexico*, and is co-author of *Science and the Spirit of Man* and *The Unlimited Community* (Allen & Unwin, 1936). His latest book is *Christianity, Communism, and the Ideal Society*, just out from the same firm. He last appeared in our pages a year ago, with *The Other Barber*, a story.

DELFIN FRESNOSA lives in Manila. He writes that he was " born twenty-one years ago of poor farmer parents. Went to school in the village school at seven and finished High School in 1931. Loafed for four years, then decided to enter a teacher's college, but left after a year. Enrolled last October in the University of the Philippines ". He is a member of St. Veronica's Press, a group of experimental writers, and published his first story in 1935.

JOHN PUDNEY contributed a story, *The Albions' Secret*, to our spring issue. He then re-wrote it as a radio-play. We print the first eight pages, in order to give our readers some idea of the form of a radio-script, which they can compare with the original.

HEINRICH VON KLEIST (1777-1811), though now recognised as Germany's greatest dramatist, did not find his place in German literature until long after his death. The translator supplies a note: " Living at the time of the Romantic schools of thought, he himself,

though of that generation, belonged to none of them. His volcanic process of creation fused form and thought in such a specific way that his medium, the language, is of utmost power and plasticity. This language does not lend itself to translation and for this reason Kleist is not well known outside Germany. His short novels and æsthetic essays are, however, easier to recreate in another language." The paper, *About the Marionette Theatre*, in this number was previously printed 127 years ago in *Berliner Abendblätter*, of which Kleist was editor.

LESLIE HALWARD was born in 1905 in Birmingham. He attended council, and then grammar, school; served a seven years' apprenticeship and worked eighteen months as an improver. Then, "decided that I should never be a toolmaker." So he went into the building trade, became a plasterer at sixpence an hour, and was a plasterer for two and a half years. Fell out of work and began to write while on the dole. His first story was published in *John o' London's* in 1932. He has since contributed to *New Writing*, *The Manchester Guardian*, *Left Review*, *New Stories*, *The Listener*, *New English Weekly*, etc. His first collection of stories, *To Tea on Sunday*, was published a year ago by Methuen, and his second, *The Money's All Right*, is due in September from the same firm.

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LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY

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NO. 8

EDITORIAL

LONDON SAW TWO processions last month. Twelve days before that for which Hyde Park had been turned into a camp, among the municipal maypoles the May Day procession milled round Marble Arch. It was bigger than usual, more elaborate and better organised, but of all the cars and exhibits what stays in our mind is a model of a ship, mounted on wheels. That replica is a reminder of something that no amount of cheering, fluttering pennons, and floodlighting can let us forget, for the original was the *Seven Seas Spray*, the first food-ship to run the Bilbao blockade.

Thomas Mann himself writes on Spain in this number. In the next Charles Madge, profiting no doubt from recent events, will describe "Mass Observation". We intrude between them merely to state that four thousand Basque children are refugees in this country.

England's own children have been well looked after. On 12th May special stands were set apart for them; milk was delivered during the day; the adult crowds were marshalled by police, troops, loud-speaker cars, and scouts with crush-barriers, so that the children could get safely and speedily away. They will be the next generation, if economics permit. Authority knew what it was doing when it ensured to the children, who will be the voters, taxpayers, and recruits of to-morrow, a vivid and abiding impression of May the twelfth. It is not cynical to say that, and it is merely humanitarian to remind ourselves that these Basque children are also a generation that will hand on their impression to the next. With them, it will be of *débris*, not decoration; aerial bombs instead of "pennies from heaven", and searchlight and shell-fire rather than illuminations. These young Basques have been given war by their elders. They have partaken, against their will, of that worst of man's achievements—not only the destruction of life, but the belittling of it in men's minds. Spain has become a land where Death walks more certainly than the living. For that we are each, in some part, responsible. The memory of what these children have seen and suffered, will remain, causing we cannot yet tell what wounds. But physically, four thousand of these children are safe. Authorization for the evacuation of four thousand was granted by the British Government. They are a handful, and as the visitors, the foreigners, and

the colonial contingents depart, let those who are left prepare to greet these new guests.

They have lives to live. Let that be made possible for them. Their parents have shown for what kind of living Basques stand. England has recently shown what she can do in the way of merry-making and magnificence. Money has been spent lavishly, for there has been no attempt to make this May's ceremonial equal in economy that which served William the Fourth. The poor streets have done themselves proud, collecting surprising sums for flags and food. As we see or read of those teas, as we watch the English people making the town their home, may we think of Basques, deprived of theirs. We are glad that those who so gaily contributed to their own pleasure, whether for teas or champagne suppers, have been no less generous in regard to the needs of others. We may sleep in the streets because we choose to and the Police do not stop us ; Spaniards, though their homes are in ruins, dare not because of air-raids. Here the people have been invited to celebrate perpetuation of tradition into the future. Now that the tents are folded, the banners down, the stands removed, the model of the *Seven Seas Spray* can be clearly seen once again. It is remembered that the Basques are part of the future.

On one day in London more people were gathered than have ever been in one city since the beginning of the world. Five and a half million persons were able to travel underground, without accident, in forty-eight hours. They had had a free show. They had taken possession of streets and squares. It is good that they now pay for that by offering, both from purse and spirit, hospitality to the homeless and brotherhood to the brave—to the Basques, of whom let it also be remembered there are more than the four thousand now with and dependent on us.

NEWS REEL

THERE WAS AN Air Raid Precaution exhibition in Oxford Street. On one of the exhibits a notice announced in best theatre-programme style: "Gas-proof room, furniture by Heal." The reverse of this comment is supplied by a young man who, in other times, would have been an interior decorator. In a way, he still is, but the way is different. He calls at the homes of newly-arrived people and, just as they have got their new carpets down and their clean curtains up, he inquires if they would like him to make their rooms gas-proof.

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A WRITER

Not as much was written about Mary Butts as her place in English letters deserved. She died in March, at Sennen, Cornwall. Time will judge her gifts; her devotion to the craft of writing we conceive it our privilege to testify. We did not meet her often, but we knew her long and, to reverse the cliché, she was never the same. She changed, and thus preserved continuity. To those who remember the advent of *Ashe of Rings* in its first, Contact Press, edition, to whom *Speed the Plough* was an undergraduate revelation and the later tales of Felicity Taverner a pæan of prose—if a frustration of psychology (for the odd "triangle" of characters she created seemed a convention as well as a spell)—it is hard to realise that Mary Butts was only forty-four. Yet, again, to those who knew her, she seemed so much younger, living a life that demanded more than was best for her art, and sprinkling with "darlings" a Socratic dialogue on the need for compression in writing. She would write, too, of her beliefs. "I was so glad to get your letter. It came, by special arrangement with heaven, by the same post as three pages closely-typed reproach, asking me why I took no interest in World Problems. If I had seen the starving children and the street fights . . . I wouldn't waste my time on art. It's a person whose opinion I value, so I felt miserable. I care about those things, of course, especially the kids; but not as a writer. What matters in the end is what goes on inside people. I'll write of greater people and greater situations in time. Only, give me time. Thinker Butts message to the nation will come through later. So you can see the extra delight your letter was. This is spelt all wrong, last thing, I'm sleepy. The new book is nearly done, almost at its exciting finish and I can hardly think of anything else."

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AND AN EARLY CONTRIBUTOR

It would do her injustice to pretend that acquaintance proceeded without jars. She greeted the announcement that we had taken over

Life and Letters, with "Bad news—I mean, I'm glad you've got it, but the late editor was a very dear friend of mine." She added, "I wish you all possible success with it," and she came to like the paper. "Congratulations on your quarterly" was one of her last messages, and she continued to send us manuscripts, although she refused our rates of pay. Thus it was only as an act of grace on her part that in our first number we were able to print *The Guest*, a story originally taken by Ellis Roberts.

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THE TILT-BOAT OF GRAVESEND

Red-Scarfe and Tawny-Scarfe were the names of two English soldiers, whose "Tongue-Combat lately happening in the Tilt-Boat of Gravesend" is the subject of a tract, published in 1632, by the English Minister at Utrecht. We can believe that it would contain "many quaint phrases current among the common people at the time" and it would be interesting to see how many are still in usage. But lest we be thought flippant, or Messrs. Myers' catalogue trivial, let us add that this also contains *Preceptes of Cato* with annotations "of D. Erasmus of Rotterdame, verve profitable for all menne" (1560). This book, of which only two copies are recorded, is offered at five guineas. That is one guinea more than twenty-one pages of *The Merchant of Venice* from the Second Folio, but five shillings less than a first edition of Goldsmith's *Life* of Nash. Thomas Heywood's *Hierarchy of the Blessed Angels* (1635) is £4 15s., and a first edition of Otway's *Don Carlos*, admittedly far from perfect, is 12s. 6d. All these are cheaper than a *Life of Mrs. Jordan* (1831) for which £6 10s. is asked. The two volumes are "enhanced by the insertion of 133 extra illustrations", playbills, and original letters. Is it not always the way? When it comes to rare items, the old copies of obscure books, rather than works since become famous, are those which draw our money. Shakespeare, Heywood, Erasmus—their legacy transcends copies or covers. It is the small fry, the actress who married William IV, the two soldiers Red-Scarfe and Tawny-Scarfe, that tempt, tantalise, and are treasured.

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THE WONDERFUL MAGAZINE

In the same catalogue, we have found a magazine which does as near as maybe what we set out to do in this News Reel. It is called *The Wonderful Magazine and Marvellous Chronicle; or New Weekly Entertainer*, and it is described as "A Work recording Authentic Accounts of the most Extraordinary Productions, Events and Occurrences in Providence, Nature and Art. . . . Including Accounts of surprising Escapes from Death, Discoveries of long concealed

Murders, Accounts of Persons famous for Eating, Drinking, Sleeping, etc. . . . and whatever else is Wonderful, Marvellous or Astonishing". Comprehensive, it sounds. It was published in 1793, in five volumes. Another item of the same century is *A Master-Key to the Rich Ladies' Treasury ; or The Widower and Batchelor's Directory*, containing "An exact Alphabetical list of the Duchess, Marchioness, Viscountess, Baroness Dowagers, Widows and Spinsters, etc." (we like that "etc.") "in Gt. Britain, with an account of their Place of Abode". After this, it is not surprising that there should be also some anonymous poems, *Good Advice to the Ladies to Keep Single*, "in which are painted, in very lively colours, the Pictures of many terrible Husbands." One of these might have been Mr. Bachelor Butterfly, whose *Veritable History* recounts that "after being married in the belly of a whale, narrowly escaped bigamy and became the father of eight hopeful children". But this gentleman was as late as 1845, and his *History* must be put down as another example of that strange Victorian humour, which also produced a novel, *I Says, Says I*, by one Thinks-I-To-Myself. The two volumes of this, uncut, may be obtained for 10s.

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UNDERSEAS VISITORS

It seems we have been wrong all these years, when we talked of a diving suit. We didn't do it often, we admit, but still, we were wrong. "Dress" is the word for what might be called ocean-bed clothes. Moreover, for materials, rubber is out. Metal's the wear. One reason for this—and we think sufficient—is that if a diver (in a rubber dress) "accidentally slips into deep water", the increase in pressure crushes his body into the helmet, with fatal results. If, also, insufficient care is used in raising him to the surface, he suffers from permanent paralysis. Further, the best pearls, corals, and sponges lie in depths beyond the reach of the rubber dress. In short, "it is generally recognised that the ordinary rubber diving dress is very limited in the scope of its operations." We have no difficulty in agreeing, though we weren't till now among those who recognised it. Poor rubber! It has served divers as best it could, and now it is out, superseded by a metal dress which can go six times as deep. This is chiefly due to cushions of liquid between the joints, which take the pressure of the water and leave the limbs free. The dress, of which an advertisement has reached us, is fitted with "extremely sensitive artificial hands", there are alternative hands "capable of being revolved from the inside", as well as alternative legs for divers of various sizes. The inventor claims for this dress "a mobility, even an agility, that is almost unbelievable. I have lain down flat on my back, or face down, and arisen in less time than it would take a man on dry land. I have been able to roll along the bottom alternatively face down and

then on my back, and keep this up indefinitely ". Next time we look at the sea, we shall think of all this going on, full fathom five. But despite these delights, we're not drawn to deep-sea diving. It isn't that we have it unfairly over the nude natives of the Persian Gulf, who " die young, suffer from deafness, bad teeth, suppuration of the ears, etc. ", or feel mean compared to the Greek sponge-divers, who " often suffer from almost complete paralysis when on dry land ". We simply find that the advertised " scope for usefulness " of the metal diving-dress cancels out. For it " can be used to great advantage for naval requirements such as saving lives from sunken submarines " and if it is asked, who's going to sink them, we'd have you know that part of its scope is " for destructive purposes, such as laying explosives ". Anyone who wonders what fish see, now knows—divers, in up-to-the-minute dress, laying explosives and then waiting hopefully for lives to rescue. If there's an Audrey among the octopi, she must laugh and laugh.

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THE TAXIMEN'S PLAY

It is a long time since we have enjoyed ourselves at a theatre as much as we did some weeks ago in Britannia Street, King's Cross. The plays were *Waiting for Lefty* and *Where's That Bomb?* They were produced by John Allen and acted, at the Unity Theatre Club, by men and women who had already done a day's work. That may be why they hadn't had time to pick up affectation. Certainly, it was a relief to hear English spoken cleanly, and given its due, as a living language. *Lefty*, dealing with an American taxi-strike, wakened the right response, but it was *Where's That Bomb?* that really impressed us. Though banned by the Lord Chamberlain, this has already won fame as " the taximen's play ", and a good play it is. It is not easy to find a fresh comic idea ; Roger Gullan and Buckley Roberts have found it. They have developed it brilliantly, using many conventions, handling the theme on about four planes at once, in a manner which many more practised playwrights must envy. As to the play, it is published at a shilling by Lawrence and Wishart, and can be read : the point of this paragraph is to draw attention to a theatre-club which can find and produce such plays as these.

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UNITY THEATRE CLUB

It has others. During its first year, Unity Theatre Club has produced nine working-class plays of political significance, including work by Randall Swingler, Toller, Ramon Sender, Jack Lindsay. It has sponsored a tour of *Waiting for Lefty* in County Durham and, as we write this, is rehearsing *Aristocrats*, one of Meyerhold's big

successes, which is to be produced by Herbert Marshall. It will be followed, soon after this issue is out, by *Cannibal Carnival*, a new play in seven scenes by one of the authors of *Where's That Bomb?* Unity is, further, affiliating itself as the theatre branch of the Left Book Club, and will not only continue to produce its own plays, but will publish plays for Trade Union and Co-operative groups to act, and advise on production, etc. In short, it bids fair to achieve its aim and, when in the autumn bigger and better premises on the ground floor of its present home are available, it will be the first Workers' Public Theatre in this country.

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IN MEMORY OF FLECHTHEIM

The taste and discrimination of Alfred Flechtheim, the art dealer, who died in London in March, was responsible for the wealth of French impressionist and post-impressionist painting that is to be found in German provincial collections. He had galleries in Berlin and Düsseldorf and among contemporary painters, as his private collection testified, was on particularly intimate terms with Picasso, Juan Gris, Marie Laurencin. His great influence on the artistic life of his country up to 1933 was largely due to the fact that the breadth of his sympathies enabled him to bring together artists of every calibre and nationality. How quickly their ideas germinated in the fertile atmosphere he created can be seen from his annual *Omnibus* and from the magazine, *Der Querschnitt*, which he founded just after the war of 1914-18. Since 1934, he had been living in London, where his activity was evident in such shows as the French Exhibition last autumn at the Burlington Galleries. His life and work, and his influence on the artistic renaissance of Germany after the War, will find their memorial in the ranks of art-lovers of more generations than that which most immediately benefited.

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MOVING PICTURES

Some ripples of that influence, it may not be too fanciful to imagine, may be seen in certain signs of an increased artistic consciousness in the United Kingdom. True, there may be no great cause for satisfaction in the various schemes for lending, rather than buying pictures outright. But, the good done by private patrons notwithstanding, pictures are made to be seen and not stored, and such activities as those of Picture Hire, Limited, of Brook Street, must be all to the good. We notice that both pubs and railway waiting-rooms have lately been recognised as fruitful ground for loan-exhibitions. But the movement goes further than that. Though it may be a help to buy a picture on hire-purchase (and *after* you have decided you could, as the saying

goes, "live with it" by having it on trial), there will always remain those who can't buy, even deferred. Centres of social life in poor districts, where there isn't much natural benison and beauty of other kinds is hard to come by—what are they to do? We are reminded that for some time past the Circulating Picture Club (President, Campbell Dodgson, late Keeper of Prints and Drawings at the British Museum) sends out selections of reproductions, which "avoid the more hackneyed Renaissance and eighteenth-century painters" in favour of modern artists. The club was founded by Ethel Barton, whose work at the Challenge Gallery is well known. She died in January, and it is planned to found a visible memorial by endowing the club, and thus ensuring its continued expansion and usefulness. Information about this can be obtained from the Secretary, 91 Great Russell Street, London, W.C. 1.

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THE PARTY SPIRIT

Spring does several things to one, waiting for a bus does yet others, and the combination of the two recently produced in us the profound reflection that when one is tired of being regularly made tired of something, it is high time to examine the reason. That is why we sometimes read Mr. Garvin, and why, more pertinently, we looked into a joke-shop in the Haymarket the other day. We hadn't looked before, we said, because it was a comment on human nature that they had the same jokes. They were still there—the plate-lifter, the rubber-pointed pencil, and though the blob of ink had been replaced by "imitation spilt water, twopence per piece", artificial beetles (to put in beer) were still two for threepence. But the real comment, it suddenly struck us, was the prevalence of two factors—food and noise. Modern jokes emphasise the roll which vibrates when you pick it up, the packet of chocolate which emits flame when it is offered. Cakes of soap (there's a pun there), sweets with "real vinegar centres", cotton-wool biscuits and tea-caddies presenting snakes instead of Souchong are among the items which make it possible to compile a meal besides which Timon's water-banquet would be manna from heaven. In the spring-washed air, we felt like explorers come on relics of a forgotten civilisation as we stared at these dusty mirth-makers. In that mood it was clear to us that the people who use them could stand almost anything else but that others should eat. Or, of course, couldn't, so that they had to get their own back on them when they were guests at a meal. The other man may always have more food than you have. That's why, snobbishly, we usually give our friends more than we can afford—to show we aren't afraid. When we offer a joke-sausage instead of a real one (and they are prominent among jokes) we pretend we don't want it, by making it a disappointment. That pretence lets us do what we really want to—

frighten the other man off the food by making it unpleasant. It doesn't matter if he has it, because the food isn't food at all—and he doesn't know it at first, but we do.

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EXPLODING FRUIT

It seemed to us (still waiting for the bus) that this found its climax in exploding fruit. When we were young, bananas were made of rubber and oranges gave a squeak. But now they explode, and even walnuts don't have kernels but charms, in the shape of doll-babies, which, if you play the game, you can't eat. Originally, man's great wish, after eating, was to make himself heard (if he wanted to eat, he usually should not be). Once he was heard, authority was established, and energy saved—he did not have to go to people, they came to him. Later, he could "throw his voice" with stones and spears, which bore a message in clear fashion. To-day, he finds outlet in anonymous articles, invisible radio—and "jokes" such as exploding fruit, pens that go bang when picked up, hat-pegs and door-jambs that back-fire. Matchboxes which squeal when opened and an equipment which emits a "human voice when placed in a hat, all sizes", further illustrate the need to keep out of harm's way whilst being within earshot. Jokes, which create "the party spirit", are, as we always suspected for that reason, veiled attacks. For the bitterness, we "make light of them". We recalled the powdered books, poisoned rings, and flowers of the Middle Ages as we idly regarded their modern survivals—the charcoal-backed novels, squirting rose-buds and rings of the Haymarket and, a bus coming along, we were glad to leap aboard before we dare admit we were quite sure we saw what lay behind "Miniature Eton Hat with Snake (light on Saucer), Mexican ditto, sixpence".

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THE JOKE OF THE MONTH

Always complimentary about this review, *The Nottingham Guardian* surprised us in its review of our Spring issue by saying that "Poultry is represented by half a dozen writers". We had got as far as covering corn in that issue, and before that we came out on grey seals. But we hadn't thought of getting to grips with a henhouse, least of all to deputing six writers to study eggs from six angles, and it took us some time to realise that "poetry" was what had been meant.

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ORCHIDS

For the second time, we have come to the end of a year's publishing of this journal. The times make it irrelevant to call for compliments and we have no desire for self-congratulation. We are glad, both to have

carried on *Life and Letters* and to have created "LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY" for two years. That we have been able to do this is proof of our readers' interest; we ask confidently for their continued investment, and for the benefit of new readers, who may ask what all this is about, we beg leave to record some of the work it has been our privilege to publish since September, 1935. The variety of our contributions and the fact that our authors come from no one group has caused us to be criticised in some quarters for lacking a self-evident policy. A glance, only a little more than cursory, at our eight numbers will, however, show certain well-defined facts. First, deliberate attempt to acquaint readers with translations of the best European and Oriental authors; secondly, parallel with this, a series of articles on contemporary literature in civilised countries; this has so far included America, Iceland, China, the Irish Free State, and will continue in the near future with France, Czecho-Slovakia, Austria, and Wales. Since literature cut off from life is a tree without roots, the roots of our life to-day have been examined in studies and essays on wars, flying, psycho-analysis, nutrition, unemployment, immigration in Palestine and school-conditions in France. A further feature has been made of old diaries. In reviews, we have been the only quarterly to give serious consideration to the cinema in all its aspects; commercial theatre has been renounced in favour of work done by the groups, which we consider more important, and our book-reviews, by experts who are not hacks, have won the praise of the European press. In poetry, concerning ourselves mainly with those progressive enough to be beyond cliques, we have been able not only to print many rising poets but also to introduce several, printed for the first time in our pages, and our section of excerpts has enabled readers to read, before publication in book-form, new work by Ignazio Silone, Havelock Ellis, Osbert Sitwell, A. Calder-Marshall, Bryher, Dylan Thomas, Leslie Halward, S. M. Eisenstein. Finally we would point out that, whilst insisting on our right as men of letters to be able to criticise all parties, we have not once affronted readers with fascist or nazi work.

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FUTURE FRONT

As earnest of continued progress, we are happy to announce that newcomers to our list of authors include Stephen Spender, Halldor Stefansson, Louis Guilloux, Sean O'Faolain, Violet Hunt, Siegfried Bernfeld, Philip O'Connor, etc. For personal reasons, due to increased calls upon time, Petrie Townshend is retiring from post of co-editor, but will continue to contribute.

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INTRODUCING EXPANSION

The first Brendin publication was "LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY". It was followed by limited editions of Marianne Moore's "The Pangolin" and H.D.'s. "The Hedgehog", both illustrated by George Plank. The reception accorded to these has enabled us to extend our activities, and we are taking off from the other end of the scale—turning from expensive editions to shilling pamphlets.

Cinema Survey began the series. In it Bryher writes on film in education, Dallas Bower on film in the social scene, and Robert Herring on film in entertainment. It will be followed by a *Shakespeare Survey* (William Empson, George Garrett, etc.), *Pub Survey* (by a journalist), *Cooking Survey* (by Adrienne Monnier, of Paris), and a *Theatre Survey* (taking in Drama in Verse, Workers' Plays, Puppets, Ballet, Producing). Most of the *Survey* series will be specially commissioned, but we are open to consideration of manuscripts on matters of contemporary interest by the generation that is alive to-day and fighting for to-morrow. Copy, from six to ten thousand words, should be addressed to the Directors, the Brendin Publishing Company, 26 Maiden Lane, W.C. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE

FROM CHINA

(To the Editor of LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY)

SIR,—PROBABLY YOU would like to know that I have been a constant reader of *Life and Letters* ever since the time of *Life and Letters* "Yesterday", when it was edited by Desmond MacCarthy. Your continual renovation has earned you a faithful admirer in China is a matter of fact beyond suspicion.

Out of clear sky you have professed a great interest in Chinese literature and even ventured to publish a number of translations in Number 5, which has undoubtedly brought a much closer relation between us. The article and stories in that issue, I understand, are a selection from Edgar Snow's *China Now*. The *Introduction to Modern Chinese Literature* is, of course, a good piece of second-hand summary work, comprehensive though badly-informed. Unfortunately the stories are but laughing stocks even in their own country, whose standard of literature is surely very much deteriorated since the revolution. Anybody who is acquainted with reading matters will be able to tell that they are nothing but childish works of grown-up idiots. They can't even be called "stories". To think that they could represent modern Chinese literature is either a betrayal of his own ignorance or an insult to a country who has at least once given the world masters like Li Po and Tu Fu. What little we have of works by our modern authors, there are much better pieces than those you have printed. I could name at random any twenty or thirty that might give you some pleasure. Could I write better English, or American as good as Edgar Snow, I would assuredly make a few decent translation to illustrate my information. However, your warmest enthusiasm is heartily appreciated: here are my thanks.

688 Avenue Haig, Shanghai, China.

Sincerely Yours,
HEH-VEN PAN.

[We bow to a knowledge of Chinese literature necessarily greater than our own. At the same time, we are sorry that our correspondent, who seems vigorous but vague, did not enable us to learn more. He does not tell us why he considers Nym Wales's article badly-informed, why the tales by our Chinese contributors were "not stories at all", nor does he give us the names of the twenty or thirty authors whom he considers better. If it is true that the work included in *Living China* is a laughing stock in its country of origin, we think it interesting to see what kind of writing is laughed at in China to-day. If we find it hard to consider our correspondent's view representative, that is because of the statement that China's standard of literature has deteriorated since the revolution. Writers in such times may not be models of the fine prose or form in use before a revolution. But they play their part in giving form as well as voice to new conditions, and for that reason we are glad to be able to follow Pa Chin and Chang Tien-Yi with a story, in the next issue, by Hsiao Hung.—ED.]

FROM IRAQ

(To the Editor of LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY)

SIR,—Mr. W. A. STEPHENS knows much about his subject : the Arabic verse, published in your Spring Number, but his understanding of the Arabic literature, and the Arabic language needs an equivalent standard. Al Mutanabbi gained a very fair and well-informed critic in his person, while the Arabic language missed that quality in him.

The vocabulary of the Arabic language is treated by Mr. Stephens as similar to the English vocabulary in enormousness : “ so vast,” he states in his article, “ is this (Arabic) vocabulary that no Arab Professor can know his own language as comprehensively as an English knows his. For example, the *names* for camel and horse run into hundreds.”

It is apparent that Mr. Stephens means the adjective in the word *name*, for there is only one *name* in the Arabic language for the camel and horse, and those hundreds of words mentioned by him are merely adjectives.

Yours faithfully,

The Ministry of Interior, Baghdad, Iraq.

A. W. AMIN.

[W. H. Stephens writes : “ If your correspondent will refer to his Arabic Grammar, he will find that Arabic words are divided into three classes : names, verbs, and particles. All the hundreds of words I alluded to are included in the first class, *names*. “ We hear of the ninety-nine names of Allah ; and two of these are mentioned in the opening sentence of the Koran. In English these are generally translated as ‘ The Merciful, The Forgiving ’. Your correspondent would call these words *adjectives* ; perhaps *proper names* ; but in either case they belong to the Arabic class of *names*. Your correspondent signs himself *Amin*. Presumably, that is his *name*. But he would call it an adjective, as it means ‘ Faithful ’. In any case it belongs to the Arabic class of *names*. But perhaps his underlying complaint is a mistaken idea that in some way there seems to be some blame somewhere cast upon either the Arabic language or the Professors There is none. Probably I esteem both even more highly than he does ; and I have had a wide acquaintance with both. If he will refer to his books on ‘ Arabic Rhetoric ’ he will find a section under the heading ‘ Praise ’ ; and a subsection ‘ The Heightening of Praise by a Suggestion of Blame ’. If he finds any suggestion of blame in my words it falls under this subsection.”]

TO PUDDLE TOWN

(To the Editor of LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY)

SIR,—YOUR OWN parenthetical paragraph on Miss Thompson’s literary escalade would appear to make any further comment superficial. It is ever difficult to be pedantic—I do not say pedagogic—about so fluid a medium as the English language ; had Miss Thompson used the expression “ the writing of correct grammar ”, it would have been more easy for her to make her remarks in safety. For to worry about the use of the word “ but ” at the beginning of a sentence, and then to use “ or ” in a similar position in her tirade was absurd.

Were it not for the fact that Miss Thompson recommends for your edification two delightful books on English usage, I would have passed over her letter as being unworthy of comment, since it was written by someone whose nature was impetuous enough to allow her to subscribe to a magazine on hearsay. But (there it is), Miss Thompson calls herself a person with a strong love of literature. So I, for my part, without defining my own attitude to any of the arts, would venture to recommend to her Havelock Ellis's *The Dance of Life*; and, for my own immediate approbation, beg her to turn to the chapter headed "The Art of Writing", to the pages wherein Mr. Ellis waxes wrathful about the pedantic and ascetic grammarians. "Just as the solar system was not made in accordance with the astronomer's laws, so writing is not made by the laws of grammar . . . when a new comet, cosmic or literary, enters the sky, it is their descriptions which have to be readjusted, not the comet."

However, I agree with Miss Thompson that your editorials can be difficult to comprehend; but I must, out of fairness to yourself, Miss Thompson, and myself, admit that they are only so at times when I have been too tired, too lazy, too choleric, or too neurotic to understand anything that required more than a popular magazine mentality or condition of mind to enjoy.

If Miss Thompson feels that there should always be a comma before every relative pronoun, and even if (yes, I will use the indicative, just as she does!) she considers its omission to be of no importance, she is by all means entitled to her opinion. It need be no one else's. Let her wallow in what was good literature fifty years ago by steeping herself in its tomes. But (oh!) it would be easier and *pleasanter* to progress unhampered by such restrictions.

Miss Thompson's second letter moves me to regret. What a pity it is that she has no magazine of her own to edit; I feel that if she had, she would not venture to state what might or might not be permissible in an editorial which she did not write.

As for her Sonnet, it is superb. In the medium of poetry she would be bound to excel, for what we call "Poetic Licence" will cover a multitude of sins. And, perhaps, a few more, if the multitude become out of hand.

I am, Sir,

Your humble admirer,

10 Millman Street, Holborn, W.C. 1.

GRAHAM BROOKS.

EPILOGUE TO "SPAIN"

By THOMAS MANN

(For a pamphlet published by the Socialist Alliance of Swiss Women, Zuerich)

(*Translated by H. T. Lowe-Porter*)

AS LITTLE AS Romain Rolland, who wrote the flaming foreword to this book, was I born a political man : that is to say, a partisan, whose will exercises restraints and limitations upon his intellect. So it was not as a partisan that I was asked to write the closing words of this appeal to humanity ; and it is no interest which bids me obey the behest, but only my suffering and indignant conscience. For it is interest which—with the consciencelessness reserved, as we all know, for the " man of action "—commits all the great rascalities in the world. As now in Spain. Then whose affair is it, if not the creative artist's—the man whose emotions are free—to assert the human conscience against the baseness of interest, at once so presumptuous and so petty ; to protest against the stultifying, all-embracing confusion made in our time between politics and villainy?

There is no lower kind of scorn than that visited upon the artist who " descends into the arena ". And the ground of that scorn is interest : interest which prefers to gain its ends in darkness and silence, unchecked by the forces of the intellect or the spirit. These, interest would confine to their proper domain of the cultural, by telling them that politics is beneath their dignity. The result is that the cultural becomes the slave of interest, its accessory and accomplice, all for the false coin of a little dignity in return. The artist must not see, that in this stately retreat to his ivory tower he is committing an act of anachronistic folly—must not see, yet to-day can hardly fail to see.

Democracy is to-day to that extent a realised and intrinsic fact, that politics is everybody's business. Nobody can deny this ; it stares us in the face with an immediacy never known before. Sometimes we hear somebody say : " I take no interest in politics." The words strike us as absurd. Not only so, but egotistic and antisocial, a stupid self-deception, a piece of folly. But they are more : they betray an ignorance not only intellectual but ethical. For the politico-social field is an undeniable and inalienable part of the all-embracing human ; it is one section of the human problem, the human *task*, which the non-political man thinks to set off, as the decisive and actual, against the political sphere. The decisive and the actual : it is indeed that ; for in the guise of the political the problem of the human being, man himself, is put to us to-day with a final, life-and-death seriousness unknown

before. Then shall the artist—he who, by nature and destiny, ever occupies humanity's furthest outposts—shall he alone be allowed to shirk a decision?

Life-and-death seriousness. I use these words to express the conviction that a man's—and how much more an artist's—opinions are to-day bound up with the salvation of his soul. I deliberately use a religious terminology; so convinced am I, that an artist who, in our time avoids the issue, shirks the human problem when politically presented, and betrays to interest the things of the spirit, is a lost soul. He must be stunted. Not only because he sacrifices his existence as an artist, his "talent", and produces nothing more which is available for life. But because even his earlier work, not created under the pressure of such guilt, and once good, will cease to be good and crumble to dust before humanity's eyes. That is my conviction. I have instances in mind as I write.

I shall be asked what I mean by spirit and what by interest. Well then: the spiritual, seen from the politico-social angle, is the longing of the people for better, juster, happier conditions of life, more adequate to the developed human consciousness. It is this longing, affirmed by all those who are of good will. And interest: interest is all that which seeks to thwart this consummation, because it would thereby be cut off from certain advantages and privileges; seeks by every means at its command, not scorning the basest, even the criminal. Or, well knowing that in the long run it must fail, tries to put off as long as it can the evil day—for a little while, for a few decades. In Spain, interest rages. Rages with a shamelessness such as the world has seldom seen. What has been happening there for many months is one of the most scandalous and mortifying pages which history has to show. Does the world see it, feel it? Only very partially. For murderous interest understands only too well how to besot the world and throw dust in its eyes. From a lady—living, it is true, in the most darkened quarter of the world, I mean Germany—I have heard the words: "Who could have thought that the Reds in Spain would commit such atrocities, out of a blue sky?" The Reds. And out of a blue sky.—The present book, written not by savage Bolsheviks but by persons of Christian and middle-class views, shows how little revolutionary was the reform programme of the Spanish Popular Front, a political alliance of republicans and socialists. It shows us to what circumstances and conditions its legitimate and decisive triumph at the polls was the answer. Have we then no hearts? No understanding? Shall we let ourselves be unresistingly deprived of our last remnant of free human judgment by interest—which unfailingly appeals to the worst instincts, though it clothe itself in lying names such as order, culture, God, and native land? A people held down and exploited with all the instruments of the most obsolete reaction, strives towards a brighter existence,

more compatible with human dignity, a social order more creditable to the face of civilisation. Freedom and progress are there conceptions not yet vitiated by philosophical irony and scepticism. For these people they are conditions of national honour, values to be striven for to the uttermost. The government, with all the caution prescribed by the special circumstances, undertakes to remove the grossest abuses, to carry out the most imperative reforms. What happens? An insurrection of generals, occurring in the interest of the old exploiters and oppressors, concocted with the help of hopeful foreign interests, blazes up and misfires. It is already as good as beaten, when it is propped up by foreign governments inimical to freedom, in return for promises of strategic and economic advantage in case of victory. It is supported by money, men, and material, fostered and prolonged, until there seems no end to the bloodshed, the tragic, ruthless, obstinate carnage from either side. Against a people desperately fighting for its freedom and its human rights the troops of its own colony are led into battle. Its cities are demolished by foreign bombing planes, women and children are butchered; and all this is called a national movement; this villainy crying out to heaven is called God, Order, and Beauty. If the interested European Press could have its way, the capital would have fallen long since; the triumph of Order and Beauty over the Marxist rabble would long since have been consummated. But the half-demolished capital—at least at the moment of writing—is not yet conquered, and the “Red mob”, as the interested Press describes it, referring to the Spanish people, is defending its life, its higher life, with a lion-like courage which must give to think even the most besotted slave of interest, as to the moral forces here engaged.

The right of self-determination of peoples enjoys high official honour throughout the world to-day. Even our dictators and our totalitarian states lay stress upon it, finding it important to show that they have ninety to ninety-eight per cent of their people behind them. Well, so much is clear: the revolting military have not got the Spanish people behind them, and cannot pretend that they have. They must do their best with Moors and foreign troops. It may not be quite settled what the Spanish people want. But what they do not want is clear, abundantly: General Franco. Those European governments which are interested in the strangulation of freedom, have recognized as legal the rebel junta, in the midst of a furious struggle which they support even if they did not connive at its inception. At home they betray a considerable degree of sensitiveness in the matter of high treason. Here they support a man who delivers up his country to the foreigner. At home they call themselves nationalists. Here they enforce the power of a man to whom his country's independence is naught, if he can do to death freedom and the rights of humanity; who declares that rather shall two-thirds of the Spanish people die than that Marxism—that is to

say a better, juster, more humane order—shall triumph. It is all too infuriating, criminal, and revolting.

This volume on Spain contains pictures of the country where interest rages. It is published by women, and pre-eminently for women; it addresses itself to the emotions of free humanity, without thereby denying its own political impetus and feeling. At a time when politics have become a matter of humanity itself, as they have to-day, it would be cowardly and hypocritical to confine oneself to the unpolitical. But in all such struggles the charitable and ameliorating task falls to woman's lot; and this book appeals to the maternal instinct to aid and to console. Likewise it is not a matter of chance that the foreword and epilogue have been written not by men of party or active politicians, but by independent men of letters.

AMERICAN LETTERS

By T. C. WILSON

ANY ATTEMPT TO describe the current state of affairs in America must begin with the recognition that in what is commonly referred to as the "literary scene" the art of letters scarcely exists. In its place we find a well-oiled machine turning out daily, via an elaborate system of log-rolling—book clubs, cocktail parties, and the like—the propaganda necessary to sell publishers' wares. Formerly this set-up was confined chiefly to magazines of wide circulation and to the weekly book sections of metropolitan newspapers, but of late it has been adopted by the "quality" journals as well. The few reviewers with a concern for critical standards have been offered less and less employment or have been dropped altogether. It is thus no exaggeration to say that the evaluation of contemporary literature rests largely with men who perform not the function of a reviewer but that of a publisher's blurb writer.

This being the condition of our "literary scene", where is one to find the art of letters practised? Among the novelists? Scarcely. Though intensively cultivated, this field is perhaps the most barren. There have been several recent first novels in which a mild promise was discernible; there have been one or two that represented a definite, though strictly limited, achievement; but as for novelists whose past performances have been sufficiently impressive to make their next effort worth anticipating—whom do we have? Looking back on the last half year and ahead to what is promised for the coming months, I cannot count a handful. Those who remember Robert Cantwell's *Land of Plenty* as one of the few intelligent attempts (yet made in America) are expecting something from his forthcoming *The Enchanted City*. James T. Farrell's *A World I Never Made*, while formidable of its kind, revealed no extension of the narrow, naturalistic method he has employed in the past. This limitation of Farrell's is, in one form or another, the essential limitation of all of our better novelists, including John Dos Passos whose latest novel, *The Big Money*, is about the best that American fiction at present can boast. Dos Passos has undeniable ability, his perceptions are fresh and authentic, if superficial, he is expert at handling movement and masses of people, but neither his work nor that of any other American novelist will bear comparison with the best fiction now being written in Europe. We not only have no Malraux or Guilloux or Silone—we have nobody who even approaches them.

In poetry the spectacle is hardly more heartening, though naïve enthusiasm and optimism are as prevalent here as in England. For

some time now our publicists have been proclaiming a "poetic Renaissance". To support their contention they point to the growing number of young left-wing and wingless poets, most of whom have appeared within the last few years. To this crowd new recruits are being added so rapidly that before long poets will be descending on us like the locusts of Egypt. We are, in short, faced with the prospect of a *plague* of poets. This may sound very lively, but the fact is, no cosmetic can conceal the actual pallor of current verse. Those who are not slogan-makers are either feeble imitators of Auden, Spender, and Day Lewis or later-day versions of middle-aged persons who until quite recently penned lines about Love, Nature, and the Sensitive Soul, and condemned Pound, Eliot, and the other *avant-gardistes* of their generation.

Unfortunately we have only a few—a very few—poets to set against these incompetents. William Carlos Williams, though not a Marxist, recently published a number of poems on social themes that are remarkable for profundity of insight as well as formal excellence. Such pieces as "The Yachts", "Item", and "Late for Summer Weather" in my opinion constitute the most authentic examples of verse of social protest that we have—and they are much more truly "proletarian" than what is currently offered under that label. Williams (whom, by the way, English readers have almost entirely neglected) is an uneven writer, apparently incapable of recognising the virtues and limitations of his highly specialised method. His future work cannot be predicted with any assurance. Nevertheless, his social poems are, as I have said, the best that we can show, and it is a commentary on our left-wing press that it has paid them scant attention. Horace Gregory is another writer to whom the left press has not given adequate recognition. Gregory has reproved his detractors by concentrating on his work and holding to his convictions. His latest verse, as exemplified by "It is Later than You Think",¹ is in some respects a departure from his earlier manner, yet it evidences a noticeable growth. Among the older and established figures, where hysteria, apathy, and self-canonization are the order of the day, Marianne Moore is conspicuous for humility and restraint, plus her customary impeccable craftsmanship. Wallace Stevens also still commands attention. "Owl's Clover," a group of five long poems around a central theme, is a brilliant and often beautiful, if unconvincing, attempt to define the rôle and value of the creative imagination in the contemporary world. By far Stevens' most ambitious effort, it must be treated, if at all, in some detail. I hope to discuss it more fully at another time.

Mention of Williams, Gregory, Stevens, and Miss Moore about exhausts the list except for a few young poets. Of those who have already

¹ LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY, Autumn, 1936.

published in book form the most important are Kenneth Fearing, Muriel Rukeyser, Edwin Rolfe, and Robert Fitzgerald, whose present achievements, I think, place them in the order named. In addition one should acknowledge several young writers whose output has been meagre and confined to infrequent publication in magazines: Lionel Abel, Harold Rosenberg, and Elizabeth Bishop, who, though lacking social consciousness, is superior, technically, to any of the young left-wing poets. This, to my mind, constitutes our "Renaissance" to date.

As in England, we have witnessed what may or may not turn out to be a revival of poetic drama. Yet the situation is essentially the same here as in the other fields of endeavour. There is a great deal of *talk* about poetic drama but no real understanding of its problems. Thus far the revival has produced but one work that seems likely to be of more than passing interest and that work, significantly, is a translation. I refer to Dudley Fitts' and Robert Fitzgerald's version of the "Alcestis" of Euripides. The past season saw the staging of several poetic dramas, and although the results were generally disappointing, poets interested in writing for the theatre were at least given an opportunity to discover at first hand the difficulties of the form and the shortcomings of current efforts. Archibald MacLeish's "Panic", under the test of performance should have proved an object lesson in how *not* to write dramatic verse. Certainly the wide praise accorded Maxwell Anderson is conclusive evidence of the prevalence of wishful thinking and lack of understanding where poetic drama is concerned. If a conglomeration of stock characters and situations, inflated rhetoric and very blank verse, such as "Winterset"¹ offered, is our notion of excellence, the future of poetic drama in this country looks black indeed. Incredible as it may seem, Anderson, has received high praise from Joseph Wood Krutch, literary editor of *The Nation*. And *The Nation* is one of three or four journals we can look to for intelligent literary discussion.

This brings me to literary criticism, the sparsity and general inaptness of which are all too apparent. For one thing, there is almost no magazine where a full-length, reasoned piece of criticism can be printed—a condition arising from the fact that very little need for serious consideration of æsthetic problems is felt to exist. One would think that at a time when many writers are supposedly attempting to effect so basic and difficult a transition as that from a bourgeois ideology to the Marxist one, they would feel such a need more strongly than ever before. Yet the truth is that the majority of our critics, as well as our poets and novelists, who have tried to make this re-orientation have done so only in the most superficial sense. Marxism for them (I speak only of literary significance in this connection) has merely meant substituting one set of clichés for another. Their literary tastes and standards have not changed. Con-

¹ As I write this, Mr. Anderson has three new plays on Broadway—all of them equally defective.

fronted with a first-rate and second-rate work they almost instinctively choose the latter. For a time it was their practice to condemn or praise a book solely according to its political viewpoint. However, the formula "Politically left = æsthetically good" having proved embarrassing, a different one has been adopted, namely: "So-and-so is an excellent writer BUT he is not a communist"—a formula which by saying in effect that great verse or prose can be written *to-day* without being informed by Marxism, really negates the very thesis it is intended to promote. Add to this that the writers singled out as "excellent" usually turn out to be persons of no more than average competence and one has some idea of the confusion that characterizes the bulk of current left-wing criticism. A remark of Lenin seems apposite here: "The surest way of discrediting a new political (and not only political) idea, and to damage it, is to reduce it to an absurdity while ostensibly defending it."

I have spoken of our criticism in rather general terms because there seemed no point in rehearsing the numerous quarrels among the various factions, nor in citing names and titles that would be meaningless to English readers. Looking over the criticism recently published in this country, I find that the outstanding contribution is a translation from the French—Malraux's *The Cultural Heritage*. Probably the most intelligent reviews to appear in American journals during the past few months have been those by Norbert Guterman, another European. Is not such a condition in itself a commentary on American criticism? I do not deny that there have been occasional perceptive reviews, but a few isolated efforts do not constitute a functioning body of literary criticism. The only Americans I can think of who are writing adequate criticism are Kenneth Burke, Horace Gregory, and Edmund Wilson. Burke and Gregory each have certain limitations and each in some degree supplements the other. Burke's chief merit in all his work is his ability to handle ideas, to grasp philosophic concepts and to formulate definitions of practical as well as theoretical import. Gregory, who lacks Burke's philosophic equipment and capacity to handle general ideas, is adept at elucidating the formal aspects of literature. His wide knowledge of verse and prose and sensitivity to literary effects have provided a needed corrective to the shoddy standards operative in most contemporary criticism. Thus he supplements Burke, whose literary taste is not always as exacting as it might be. Edmund Wilson has shown himself able to assimilate both the ideational and the formal aspects of literature, but his work has been impaired by what I can only call a negative and self-defensive approach. Yet his recent essay on Pushkin (in *The New Republic*) did much to counteract the unfavourable impression created by his last book, *Travels in Two Democracies*, and it may be that he is overcoming whatever personal vagary has until now impeded his progress.

One dislikes having to give so gloomy an account of the current

American scene, especially as regards the work of the left—the only group we can any longer look to for a living and meaningful literature. It would be pleasant to be able to pull a few rabbits out of the hat at the last moment, ending on a note of optimism. Unhappily there are none. And although a chronicle like this is not the place to speculate about the reasons for such a state of affairs, I should like to suggest that our writers produce little that is profound because in almost every instance their view of life is limited to surface appearances, and because their training in the craft they practise has been hasty, careless, haphazard. They lack an understanding of historical processes; they are, many of them, unfamiliar with the literature of the past except in a casual, text-book fashion; and they possess little interest in ideas and almost no philosophic background. These seem to me the fundamental reasons why our most talented writers, who probably have as much inherent sensitivity and as acute perceptions and intuitions, seldom attain the maturity or penetration to be found in the European masters. I may add that, as far as I can make out from this distance, the situation and the reasons for it are not appreciably different in England.

NEW YORK NOTEBOOK

By KENNETH MACPHERSON

ALL AMERICA IS sitting down.

It began in France—at any rate, on a scale large enough to draw attention, and now it is here, apparently to stay. It is even possible that the walking capacity of a major part of the population may be seriously impaired, since these new squatters' rights have been asserted over such a considerable period that less people are on foot than on—well, sitting down. It is doubtful if they will be ever quite the same again; especially now that State-troopers and police are after them hammer and tongs. And the hammer and tongs of the American police, bear in mind, are far different from the almost kindly “Comerlongerame” of the British bobbie.

Here they think nothing (think nothing is perhaps right) of beating you to pulp at any moment, be you guilty or not. For instance, a young woman of considerable attraction came one evening to a small party with bruises and lacerations very much in evidence. She told me she had been riding home in a taxi with two friends and had wished to descend at her hotel. They were full of ideas, as one is here, about going on to another place, and in course of the argument the taxi stopped at a red light. At that moment the young woman rose and started to leave the taxi, but was pulled back into her seat with the usual, “Listen, you can't do that.” At which, no doubt, she became annoyed enough to raise her voice and say she damned well could and would. At that moment the taxi door was yanked open by a policeman who, in the elegant jargon of the movies, bawled, “What's going on in here?” She was seized and dragged from the taxi and struck on the head with the policeman's truncheon or night-stick as they call it; and when, stupified by the blow, she threw up her hands to protect herself, the man slapped her several times until she fell in the rainy gutter.

Meanwhile her friends too were being “smacked down” by a companion policeman and a crowd had gathered. The three of them were arrested (not before this girl had been kicked as she lay prone at the edge of the pavement) and were taken off to jail, where she was charged with assaulting an officer of the law and her friends were held for questioning.

Her attorney was able in the end—though not before she had waited without help and quite seriously injured for a number of hours—to stand the accusing policeman and the girl side by side, to expose her injuries, and ask, “Is it possible a fragile girl could by physical violence so hurt this strong and powerful man that he was forced in self-defence to inflict the injuries you can see for yourselves?”

The case was dismissed, of course, but that did not heal the wounds, nor the shock of them, nor was it an assurance that such a thing could not happen again at any time, at any place, for any reason. . . .

No, the sit-down strikers are not to be envied—that perhaps is evident enough. Nor should it be felt they deserve “what is coming to them”. They ask only for better conditions and know their peril in so doing. In the news-reels here they are hissed and applauded, and in some of the theatres the hissing is louder than the applause and in others hissing on any appreciable scale would be dangerous. This division of opinion alone, one feels, prevents film-audiences from starting a sit-down strike themselves. Here we sit till you give us better films. Not a bad idea. Nobody knows where or how it will all end. It is an odd, incalculable year. “There’s Something in the Air,” as the radio insists on letting us know in every kind of male and female voice, but, oh dear ! it is far from love. Something desperate, dangerous and at the same time unconquerable. No, indeed, there is no way to foresee what may happen.

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The great success of the year in films is, naturally, *The Good Earth*. Up to a point it is a good film, even with Paul Muni looking more Jewish than usual and not for a moment Chinese, even with its pseudo-Soviet realism, even with its Hollywood sentimentality, even though it is Occidental in feeling. The beautiful, luminous photography, the acting of Louise Rainer, the smooth, cumulative progression of narrative, and the director’s aplomb ; these are excellent. And the elaborate and difficult dramatic climaxes are not overstressed nor made clever for the sake of being clever. They grow out of the body of the film as naturally as the moving limbs of a dancer. An important film, in its way, it is ; and only when something as purely masterful as *La Kermesse Héroïque* breaks records in the smaller theatres is there a way for people here to know that better films still can be and once in a while are made. *La Kermesse Héroïque* has been here since November and now it is April, and lately it is running in several theatres.

Useless to say in Hollywood, go now and make films like that. Such a film could come only from France ; the cruel, clairvoyant Gallic humour has the genius of Europe in it, not the genius of America. Yet *Camille* with Garbo, *The Garden of Allah* with Dietrich came and went and are gone, probably for ever. And *La Kermesse Héroïque*, in French, runs for six months (and is still running) in New York City alone. Hollywood should seriously consider ideas less banal, less trivial, less second-rate. Not necessarily for all its films, because there are millions of people here in hundreds of small towns who would not appreciate anything better than what they are given. But equally there are thousands of people throughout the country who would spend the

money they prefer to keep if there were often enough films worth spending it on.

But I am afraid it is not the function of a New York correspondent to talk too much about films which certainly will have been seen in London before this.

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Perhaps, instead, the theatre? Well, plays have come and gone. It has been a very English season. In fact at one time it was almost like being in London. Gielgud, Hardwicke, Gertrude Lawrence, Noel Coward, Maurice Evans, Gladys Cooper, Beatrice Lillie, Reginald Gardiner, Irene Brown, Joyce Carey, Peggy Ashcroft—these are but a few of the dozens of English we have had here. And that I believe makes a point.

In England we are mean about letting foreign artists into the country. We are worse than mean. We are even rude. And yet masses of English actors and actresses are welcomed in America and obtain their permits with ease. Thus there is no balance and the situation is unfair. I, for one, would not complain if America decided, as it may, to make things as difficult for English artists as England makes them for Americans. It would be better the other way round, that England should make it as simple for foreigners as America does, but better still would it be that no such nonsense existed anywhere.

So far as such measures protect people of minor talent and prevent people from other countries taking their jobs, the idea is sound. But when it comes to greater talent and special talent, I think most people agree it should be as universal as music or painting and not subject to restrictions one would expect in merchandise but not in art.

There is too much wretched nationalism, too much barking up the wrong tree, too much mistrust, hardship, and enmity.

Because of this, it is a pity in many ways that Sidney Kingsley's anti-war play *Ten Million Ghosts* was not a success. Anti-war plays, as such, have little influence. Perhaps the best that can be said of them is that they are better than pro-war plays, since the ideal of respecting the very mysterious and lovely miracle of life is more reasonable than the ambition to make butchers' meat of it. But pro-war or anti-war makes little difference on the day bells ring, sirens scream, headlines yell WAR!

In *Idiot's Delight*, Lynne Fontanne has some very lucid lines to speak to her armament-building protector. The play takes place in an hotel in the Alps, probably Austria or Switzerland. War is declared and the people staying in the hotel react to it in their different ways. Two of them are a young Englishman and his wife. When the maker of armaments complains after dinner of Lynne Fontanne's silence, she reveals to him exactly what has been going on in her mind at this moment of crisis and tension and hysteria. In her mind were pictures

of the young husband crushed beneath a tank, the tank squashing him like a beetle, yet as he died he thought of his wife, and said, "Thank God, *she* is safe." But at that moment bombs were falling in London, and her unborn child was spattered over (a pause, then in scorn and hate) . . . a bishop's face.

It was a play frankly loathing war, and people seeing it were made to feel that war is indeed a ghastly and tragic error. But the very white-haired ladies mopping their eyes would be the mothers of the war-posters, prodding, as Bryher once wrote, their sons towards bayonets. One must remember that.

In Sidney Kingsley's play, the star was the big gun in *Universe Forges* (munitions factory in France) and the date, Summer, 1914. This gun (in course of construction) reached across the entire stage, very effective and menacing, and almost ready to blast its 1,300-pound shells into the living flesh of man. It was a fine conception, but as with *Dead End* (still running) the décor was more powerful than the play, the inference of it more instantly apprehended, dreaded, and familiar than the words, which did not match the keenly sensed but not sufficiently articulated viewpoint.

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Earlier this year, Maurice Evans appeared as Napoleon in *St. Helena*, by R. C. Sherriff and Jeanne de Casalis. He played Napoleon, of course, beautifully, and stepped from one royal rôle to another, namely that of Richard II, so that one personal triumph was far eclipsed by another very much greater one.

Richard II has not been played in New York for over sixty years. It is not Shakespeare at his best. The exquisite calm and illumination of his later work is here in an impure form, marred as it is with a certain boisterousness of style, a nibbling at words for their own sake. Yet the play—coming immediately after Gielgud's beautiful *Hamlet*—became at once a fantastic success and critics in jubilant and ecstatic columns found every possible adjective of praise and every possible poetic imagery, even once or twice at the expense of Gielgud, whom earlier they had worshipped. Now they said, "Here is a man of stature, a king; a man and not a neurotic," and words to that effect, as though Hamlet were as solid, stodgy, and secure as a burgomaster and as though Richard were such a man among men at that!

Of the Evans performance, perhaps nothing said was exaggerated. The performance was uncannily incisive, melodic, and vibrant with "overtones" in the Eisenstein sense of the word. The same must be said of Gielgud, and if his Hamlet was not *burgomeister*-ish enough for one or two, it was the most sustained and faultlessly poised performance one could hope to see, nervous and intensely spiritual.

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There are three Maxwell Anderson plays. Alas!

High Tor, *The Masque of Kings*, and *Wingless Victory*.

Rapidly he is becoming the Little Father of American drama.

I make no secret of the fact that his wordy speciousness, the half-measures of his outlook, the urbane and bourgeois level of his poetry, are to me on the whole insufferable. Take, for instance, *Wingless Victory*. It has Katharine Cornell as a Javanese princess brought home to New England by her husband to live with his very Puritan family. She wears a sarong and barbaric jewels and brings with her two children and a Javanese maid. The situation with its appalling delicacy and the attempts of people on both sides to bridge a painfully evident ravine is material for a very interesting play, but here the end is written in its beginning, the whole shape and plan of it swims into one's experienced mind. Truly, it is disturbing how the technique and routine of dramatic form becomes so mechanical that it is little different from a familiar jig-saw puzzle which takes up little but time, and the first introductions of the first act are the very evident summary of the whole. Add to this the grandiloquent and sermonizing verbosity of Anderson and you have all that is necessary for a most successful play.

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The Show Is On is really an excellent revue. Beatrice Lillie has not had such gay material for a long time. Her *Buy Yourself a Balloon* is incredibly joyous, the most delightful thing about it being the moment when the crescent moon in which Lillie reclines surges forward into the midst of the audience while she offers garter after garter to favoured males.

After this, perhaps the funniest show in town is *You Can't Take It With You*, which is the story of a charming family of lunatics. I hear it will be taken to London, and so I shall say nothing more of it here, except that you must see it.

There are many other plays I might write about, but space is lacking. *To-night at Eight-thirty*, *The Country Wife*, *The Amazing Dr. Clitterhouse*, and *Tovarich*, all having played in London, need no comment. That is really the trouble—it has been such a very British season.

A PSYCHO-ANALYTIC APPROACH TO THE INTERPRETATION OF GROUP PHENOMENA

By MELITTA SCHMIDEBERG

(Translated by H. Mayor)

PSYCHO-ANALYSIS BEGAN BY endeavouring to elucidate certain mental disorders. As our knowledge increased, however, it became clear that normality itself was by no means so simple a phenomenon, but as much in need of investigation as the most unique pathological conditions. There is scarcely a small child in existence who does not suffer from anxiety or other neurotic symptoms. The majority of adults are free from these troubles because they have found various ways and means of dealing with their childhood anxieties. Adult normality implies that the neurotic difficulties of childhood have been successfully "worked over". If then we are to understand this end-product which we call normality, we must first familiarise ourselves with pathological modes of reaction and ascertain how these are worked-over normally.

This is as true of the group as it is of the individual. It is not enough to study the pathological aspects of group reaction; we are bound also to inquire how society has evolved a "normal", healthy structure. Just as the highest adult achievements are derived from the simple activities and interests of childhood, so the finest features of our civilization proceed from very lowly origins. Many analogies have been found to exist between the development of the individual and of the race, between the mental life of the child and of the savage. Both are at times subject to overwhelming anxiety.

"In Korea the spirits are in possession of every quarter of the heavens and every foot of earth. They lie in wait for man by the road-side, in the trees, in the rocks, in the mountains, the valleys and the rivers. They spy upon him ceaselessly day and night. . . . They are ever about him, before and behind; they fly about his head; they call to him from the bowels of the earth. Even in his own house he has no refuge: the spirits are there also, in the plaster of the walls, and in the timber of the rooms. . . . Their presence in every spot is a hideous parody of the omnipresence of God" (Lévy-Bruhl). "The constant dread of unseen foes has robbed the Battak of every delight in enterprise; fatalism and the fear of ghosts have deprived him of all joy in life. Only in the practice of magic has he a weapon with which he may engage his enemies" (Warneck). "The delusion of witchcraft may be termed the heaviest curse which rests on Africa," writes Wilson. The primitive feel not only surrounded but also possessed by demons, to whose attacks they

attribute illness and death. Sickness, like death, is conceived of as something personal; the idea of a demon who inflicts wounds with the same weapons as the enemy is primeval and widespread. There is often a fear of evil spirits or animals within the body, destroying it or devouring its vital organs.

In dealing with these irrational anxieties, primitive man has recourse to magic. The great function of primitive medicine with its magical technique consists in its bringing temporary relief from anxiety. This momentary alleviation renders it possible to observe nature empirically and so to discover rational methods of cure. Remedies which proved efficacious were better calculated to allay anxiety than magical expedients, so that it became possible in course of time for empirical medicine to supersede magic. From the smearing with fat and blood practised by primitive man, the method of rubbing with healing ointments has developed; the expulsion of demons by the use of the hands has developed into massage; and from the practice of expulsion by incantation psychotherapy is derived. Sweating, purging, bleeding, vomiting, and fasting originally had the significance of an atonement: to-day they have their place in medical régimes. But even modern scientific medicine, which has evolved so gradually from these irrational superstitions, is still unconsciously associated with magical ideas and serves to overcome irrational fears.

These irrational anxieties reappear in full force when medicine fails, as in the case of epidemics. In every fatal pestilence the people's first thought is poison. The plague of the Middle Ages was ascribed to poisoning of the wells by Jews; in German towns, where there were no Jews, the grave-diggers were accused of this crime and in Russia, the Tartars. During the cholera epidemic of 1837 it was popularly believed in Italy that people were dying because the water had been poisoned by physicians and officials at the behest of the detested Bourbon government. As late as 1884, when a cholera epidemic broke out in Italy, the people believed that the physicians were killing the working-men for the benefit of the well-to-do. It was only when the king visited them himself that they became sufficiently calm to admit medical help.¹

This superstitious anxiety of the people of Europe in the last century and in the Middle Ages is no less irrational than primitive man's fear of demons and reveals extensive similarities with the delusional ideas of the insane and the neurotic anxieties of little children. Even if it is normally allayed by successful medical treatment, it is never wholly absent, but often appears under cover of some rational anxiety. Thus a fear of bacteria may take the place of the original anxiety of demons.

This process is not confined to medicine. All man's rational activities and institutions are linked up in some degree with irrational ideas and

¹ For a fuller account, see my paper "The Rôle of Psychotic Mechanisms in Cultural Development," *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 1930, vol. xi, p. 387, which also contains references to the literature.

strivings and serve to overcome deep-seated irrational fears. Often it happens that baseless anxieties find a displaced outlet in rational fears, so that the latter may always be found to contain a greater or lesser proportion of irrational anxiety as well. The fact that most of our institutions and scientific beliefs are largely founded in reason and empirical observation is a great achievement and a proof of man's ability gradually to discard irrational methods of mastering anxiety in favour of rational ones.

When an adult achieves this mastery over the irrational anxieties of his childhood along rational lines adapted to reality, we call him normal; when he has recourse to irrational methods of control, we say he has a neurosis. The child's fear, springing from his own death-wishes, that certain persons in his environment may die or that the world may come to an end, may assume a delusional form in the psychoses or furnish the nucleus of an obsessional neurosis. But in a normal person it may have become modified into a fear of accidents, natural catastrophes or war, which can then be overcome by belief in a kindly father-God, who will save the world from destruction, or by engaging in pacifist activities, social welfare work, the scientific study of earthquakes or creative work generally. The child's fear of starvation may later give rise to hysterical greed, alcoholism, or kleptomania, or again it may culminate in the depression and despair of melancholia. But it can also determine a man's character, his religious beliefs or choice of career, as when he deals with it by placing his faith in a God who feeds the sparrows, or by accumulating riches, opening a jam factory or becoming a cook. Primitive impulses find sublimated gratification in work and in sport; scientific debates, chess, the calling of a physician or carpenter provide outlets for aggression. This safety-valve is of paramount importance for the subject's mental welfare, and when he is suddenly deprived of it, e.g. by becoming unemployed, the ensuing state of tension is often well nigh intolerable and may give rise to anxiety and neurotic disorders. Many escape this agonising instinctual tension by resorting to direct modes of gratification of impulse life. Thus people who are out of work often become quarrelsome and discontented, tyrannise over their families, develop a greater need for sexual gratification or take an aggressive interest in politics.

But work does not merely provide a sublimatory outlet for primitive instinctual drives; it also gives people a justification in life. Consequently one cannot simply find an equivalent for it in sport or chess. Creative activity is a means of dealing with guilt and anxiety reactions to primitive destructive trends. The fears so commonly entertained that masturbation has bad effects (e.g. leads to mental deterioration) or that others can detect signs of it in one's appearance can be overcome to a great extent by doing efficient work; but these fears often become painfully conscious when people lose their position. Then they begin

to brood over the idea that this has happened because of something they may have done, feel ashamed of being without work and imagine that everyone perceives their condition. If one analyses these feelings of shame and guilt, which are devoid of any foundation in reality, one finds that they are bound up with deep-seated feelings of guilt over masturbation.

Work enables people to become independent and to earn their own living. It gives them the reassurance that they are no longer little children, helplessly exposed to every danger. Money buys bread, money gives power and independence, money is a help against various forms of anxiety. But when a man has become unemployed, all these doubts and feelings of inferiority are liable to break out afresh in all their intensity. For the individual, successful work and satisfactory pay signify his being on good terms with his fellow-men. By performing constructive work he makes reparation for his destructive phantasies and expresses his positive attitude towards society. The money he receives in return not only enables him to satisfy his real needs but also constitutes a substitutive gratification of his infantile wishes. Unemployment shows him that his good intentions have been in vain. There exists in all of us a conflict between our social feelings and our primitive instinctual drives. The more difficult it has been for a person to subdue his primitive impulses, the more severe will be the blow to his integrity if his good intentions and social tendencies are not appreciated. Then he will feel the full force of disillusion, hatred, and anxiety.

There is scarcely anyone whose capacity for work is not disturbed to some extent by psychological difficulties, mainly by feelings of guilt relating to the primitive instinctual impulses for which work provides an outlet. Many people can only work under certain conditions, e.g. when someone else finds employment for them—unconsciously, gives them permission—just as many children suffering from difficulties in eating can only eat when someone else feeds them. All in all one may say that the greater the psychological difficulties people have to contend with, the more urgent will be their need for external support and the more serious the effects of external factors, such as unemployment, which interfere with their work.

Nobody is free from doubts concerning his fitness for his work, but normally these are set at rest by actual performance. But since this means of proof is not available to the unemployed, their anxiety on this score becomes more and more acute, especially when they discover that want of practice has affected the quality of their work. The anxiety in question has the same unconscious sources as neurotic inhibitions against work. Often a man is afraid of finding fresh employment because of the risk of being thrown out of work a second time. This had proved such a terrible experience that even permanent unemployment has come to be preferred.

PARIS, 1900

By BRYHER

ALL MY LIFE I have suffered from "geographical emotions". Cities are so much easier to understand than people.

The folk tales of my infancy were stories of flaming lava and a lost city, of the way to the Alps through wild bilberries and Christmas pines. My family had travelled constantly to such mythical-with-adventure places and any day for me might be the not impossible first date of "going abroad".

One May evening I woke to hear a voice saying, "if you are good, we are going to Paris to-morrow." I was just five and a half years old.

The hour on the ship, my first, blurs curiously into other voyages. There were to be so many of these hot summer crossings in my childhood. I expect that I went with my father to the rail, to watch the iron-bound trunks of the day swung inside a net of straps and ropes, from quay to hold. Perhaps this constant sweep of chests about the dock gave men the courage to build skyscrapers? Everything was heavy; where possible it was solid. A historian without other chronicle to guide him might reconstruct the age from the pictures of its luggage. Trunks had hooped lids buckled tightly along one side. Hat boxes were new; I seem to recall that they were considered a little fast. And light cases must have been synonymous with lack of morals for nothing less ponderous than pigskin studded with brass was to be seen.

Only one thing would not have been with us, the flat enamel bath packed with toys that accompanied us upon all English journeys. Bathrooms had yet to come into common use. An early excitement in Paris but to be dated some five years later, was a bath into which water *flowed* and was not poured.

There were always oilskins thrown over a pile of deck chairs and apprehensive faces under wide, uncomfortable hats. "So long as you close your eyes, my dear, the motion is hardly perceptible." I myself watched the seamen enviously, for I had longed throughout countless hours to be dressed in a sailor suit. "I go below and lie on my back until the stewardess tells me that we are in the harbour." We were as certain to hear such sentences as we were to see heavily fringed shawls over bright yellow bags.

At Dieppe the train surprised me, the seats were so high. Even with the guard's hand, pulling, it was hard to scramble up. Quite big boys rushed along the platform, to my astonishment in blue blouses and socks. I had myself been put for the journey into long tan stockings; only babies in England had their legs uncovered. Fisherwomen held out baskets of fish for us to see and, shouting against the wind that refilled

their white bonnets, thrust shells or dolls dressed like themselves in bright banded petticoats and wooden sabots up against the window.

The white pattern of the seat covers is so early a recollection that it seems I have always known them. They were very clean in contrast to the dusty floor but so rough to the touch. I know that the compartment was full and that I made a conscious effort to be good, not to ask too often "how long is it to Paris?" Yet the four hours seemed eternity.

My children's paper that day was full of incongruous pictures. Jacko, the monkey, with a flying scarf about his neck, pelted snowballs from a fort over Jumbo's head. All the animals were dressed like boys. I began to stare at the drawings, for I thought, "if I look hard enough I shall enter the world the other side of the paper" and once there the danger of my "worrying about the time" would be over.

At five I knew nothing of history. I had seen people shake their heads and whisper at the word "Dreyfus", but I did not know that fifty thousand English had marched in protest to Hyde Park. I had heard strangers say, however, that they would not venture to the Exhibition on account of the hostility felt towards England over the Boer War.

My first impression of Paris is of walking down a street from the station and of seeing Americans wearing tiny flags in their buttonholes lest they should be mistaken for English and molested. In my then frame of mind I was hopeful for a fight. I remember perfectly well that I clenched my fists, shouted the words of a patriotic song of the moment, and waited for a Frenchman to say something to me. I had no doubt but that I could have knocked him down. I was plump and very small, about the height of a child of three, so it must have been an incredibly funny spectacle, but pride and a magical belief that being English I had only to tap a Frenchman for him to fall over, blinded me to reality. It did not occur to me that I should leave the matter to my father were we attacked, I was equally oblivious that my truculent behaviour might bring trouble upon my parents.

To read of fascism now is to see the picture of that Paris street. I fulfilled all nationalistic obligations, in complete confidence that I was right, merely because I had been born in England. Brutality is a part of primitive nature and it is a need of childhood, atom in so vast a world, to assert its ego. My hours of inactivity flared into clenched fists, and how much of history, how much of its attendant suffering, is not due to such simple psychological reactions? Only, civilisations should be built, not by children, but by men.

The entrance and the symbol of the Exhibition was an immense arch in plaster. It was the magnified twin of a hair-ornament of the period, a two-pronged comb over which convolvulus of many decorations ramped in flowery dots. Everything at that time had to curl; there should exist a name to describe the horror of 1900 over a blank space. Sometimes I wonder how English lawns survived; it must have hurt

the owners to see the grass untwisted into hillocks, but perhaps their eyes rested only on the formal beds, the yellow calceolarias, blue lobelia, and the drooping pink geraniums considered more discreet in colour than the commoner spikes of scarlet.

There was a long wait while tickets were bought, then we walked through the gateway into an avenue lined with white pavilions. My first impression was of gravel. It was deceptively like sand and seemed to me endless. The first building that we entered, on the right I think, of the entrance, held Krupp's exhibit of long and shining guns.

My mother said that it was terrible and wanted to leave. My father pointed out how dreadful it was for so much labour to be expended merely to kill other men. I ought to be able to record my own horror but it was the height of my nationalistic period and I have to admit nothing in the Exhibition interested me so much. I wanted to touch the cannon and of course I longed to fire them. Because I remember these sensations so well, I am doubtful now if the present negative methods of teaching pacifism have much effect. Children are normally aggressive and it is better for the world to allow them outlet in the nursery. They can, and should be prevented, from transferring the natural brutality of the five-year-old mind into later political life.

We walked from the artillery (I had no feeling that it was incongruous) into the long gallery filled with toys. A corner of the Champs Elysées had been reconstructed inside a glass case and filled with dolls dressed in the costumes of the day. There was a child with a hoop, I decided critically that she did not hold it as if she used it very much, and a nurse in peasant costume with broad flowing ribbons, flirting with a soldier. His red trousers displeased me, everybody knew that the new English khaki blended much better with the landscape. In front was a baby, howling wildly, and I could not understand how the tears had been contrived. At first I thought that they were painted. After several visits I found that they were glue. But this was familiar world, the pebbles, the park bench, even the trees of the background and I felt secretly superior (remembering Kensington Gardens) to the grown-up people beside me who giggled or pointed out to each other bits of embroidery. I felt, however, a little worried lest it should be thought that I liked dolls. I had no wish to play with any of the figures but I did want to know how they had been made.

My self-confidence, however, was not to last the day. Gilded ropes kept the crowds from pressing too closely against the furniture, in rooms hung with tapestries or curtains that seemed more solid than the walls. Everything was carved; was either giant or dwarf. Mermaids wriggled from mother-of-pearl water lilies that opened into a vase, the legs of a table bent like bamboos in the wind. The glass cases were crowded; they were a snail's shell of surfaces, coral, garnet, enamel, or amber. It was an incredibly restricted time, when an invitation to tea was some-

thing holy, not to be altered save with medical certificate, when a cheque for the baker could not be sent without a precisely worded letter on hand-woven paper and when to alter the hour of dinner was to change the law itself. And perhaps because all sincerity of emotion was repressed, the age, as it felt itself dying, redoubled outward forms and put the emphasis of life upon ownership of thousands of small possessions. It was at the Paris exhibition that modern art was born. The unconscious mind of thousands must have begun to imagine blank spaces and straight lines, while the eyes stared at cabinets full of miniatures, toy clocks, jewelled thimble cases, and Fragonard paintings reproduced in beads upon tiny bags.

It was late afternoon when we left one of these palaces for the plaster glare of a main avenue. A clown, with a white face, stepped from a side pathway and said something to me. No doubt it was intended to be a joke, there were many children in the crowd. But the shock of the powder, of the strange figure was too much for me. I opened my mouth and howled.

I ran away, but down any alley now the clown might come. He could not spoil my excitement on the moving railway, but I was timorous of the circus to which we went one afternoon. It was true that clowns in a ring could not be so dangerous as a white face bent perilously towards my own level, but I preferred the Zoo. I could come into more active contact with the animals there by feeding them, without my mind prickling with uneasiness. It is for this reason, no doubt, that I do not remember much about the riders or the elephants, only that a tiny black pony with a long mane trotted round the actual rim of the arena with a notice "*entr'acte*" strapped to its saddle.

Naturally my phobia became more severe within the Exhibition walls. I tried to wriggle out of visits. Finally my parents compromised; they hired a wheeled chair, pushed by an elderly bearded Frenchman, and left me to wander about the grounds in his charge, while they visited the galleries.

He spoke no English but I found out somehow that he had a family. I liked trying to talk to him. I had begun to learn French before we crossed and every day I had to repeat so many new words. I struggled too, by myself, with the small red book that we had for the first lessons. From the beginning a new language was an adventure for me and now I can hardly remember the time when I did not speak French. Later on, I was promised a new English book for every French volume that I read alone. I was seven before I managed a whole book by myself, it was the inevitable *Malheurs de Sophie*. I thought and dreamed in French for quite a period of my childhood but as the rules of pronunciation never were explained to me, my accent has remained to this day incurably, even violently, British.

We used to drive in the Bois in the May afternoons, usually in an

open victoria. The traffic bewildered me, it was so fast and on the wrong side of the road. I do not remember seeing any motor cars until a later visit, though it was in Paris that I remember first taxis ; perhaps because of the drivers who sat in long goatskin coats above the engines, like Greenlanders paddling a kayak. But men watered the streets with hoses to my astonishment and there were none of the watering-carts drawn by big patient horses such as I often saw at home. The problem of dust was very real ; hooves flung it up in our faces unless the streets were damp, for it was long before the days of a tar spray. And as we drove home in the evenings there was always the *Tour Eiffel* for a landmark. I was convinced that it had been built as a gigantic roundabout to mark the Exhibition.

Of course I stared at the children. Nurses with what appeared to be sashes of flying coloured ribbons strung, kite-fashion, to white caps, held little girls firmly by the hand. Those of my age had on short coats and skirts in blue and fawn, and long buttoned black boots. This again was strange, for in England most of the children wore white. Little boys, more fortunate, played in sand pits. Adults remarked at once how full of infection they must be. Once we had to wait at a corner while a detachment of Arabs, their long cloaks falling over beautiful horses, trotted solemnly between the trees. " Have they really got lances ? " I remember asking, for I had been so afraid that spears were another of the realities that had perished from my world. Unlike the clown, their unfamiliar robes had no terror for me, probably because they had weapons and were soldiers.

This first visit blurs into a second made the following year, when all was dust, with the decay and ruin of the temporary buildings, but I was seven before I myself came to know the Champs Elysées, possessively and with the rights of a French child.

It began on a mournful day. I had spent the morning at the Louvre, looking at dull pictures. And I was very hungry. I was expected to taste every dish of the long dinners that my father ordered, but I could not like French food. Perhaps some far-off ancestor was an Eskimo ! Sweets could have been piled beside me and I should never have touched one, but olive oil, cod-liver oil or any kind of fat had to be locked away. I disliked sauces and unfamiliar flavours, I wanted bacon for breakfast and roast beef for lunch. I longed for my nursery tea of bread and butter spread with golden syrup and hated brioches, croissants, or French pastry. There was a drive suggested, two hours of sitting still. At this moment my German governess interceded, could I not go to the Champs Elysées ? And it being Paris and not London, before I could realise this departure from established custom, I myself was sharing in the reputed French freedom from convention and was moving not towards the Bois, but along a pebbled pathway, in the coachman's seat of a small goat cart and *I was driving it myself*.

In the middle of the drive, I heard my name. My parents had stopped their carriage, to call out to me. I supposed that they had come to take me from my cart. But what was apparently a sin in England (because you might catch measles, darling) was not so wicked in Paris. To my intense surprise, I was encouraged to proceed. But I always smiled to myself later, when I heard phrases about "continental morality". I knew all about the double standard, had I not experienced it for myself?

For the first time I was seeing the city from my own level of vision. Leaves had fallen on the stones; I took off my gloves without reproof, to hold the reins more firmly. The great wheels of landau and victoria rolled safely off, on the other side of the trees. The trip ended at the cross roads, but we walked then to join a throng of children and governesses sitting on long benches in front of a Punch and Judy show. Most of my excited companions shouted or whispered to each other, but I could not understand all the French words, it was too passive for me, too like a drive when I had to keep quiet. "It's not real," I said at once, suspicious of the sometimes visible strings of figures that were merely dolls to me and of the hooded box from which a man in shirt sleeves occasionally emerged, to hand a cap for centimes along each row. I was mildly interested in Dog Toby, but on subsequent visits we never returned. I had no use for make-believe, mine was an active world. But the box, the squeaking voice, and the dog in his frilled collar became a definite part of my map. They were the corner boundary near the road. At the opposite end a stall stood opposite a clump of trees; two boys chased a ball along the path, while a third waited for a man to cook what appeared to be pancakes on a little stove. I was amazed to find my governess waiting while the boy ate his cake and swallowed a glass of milk. "They are called *galettes*," she explained and I supposed it was part of a lesson, that she wanted me to learn a new word. But we did not move, there was another whisk of batter into the pan and in a few moments I was handed two on a plate.

I suppose that it was the first time that I had been given anything to eat in the open air. I bit into the cake excitedly, it was hot, paper-like, and probably flavoured with spice. I longed for my favourite English buns but concealed my disappointment and swallowed every mouthful. I was never willing to refuse adventures, and the wind in the branches, the open stall, the food that I was actually holding in my hand, all were a reality straight out of one of my books.

The paradise of the day was yet to come. We walked from the stall to a ring, almost hidden by trees. An old woman in a striped petticoat sat on a throne at the side and slid rings down a metal bar. Round and round the ring, children rode on painted horses, black and brown and chestnut with white spots, with bunches of feathers fastened to the forehead and short bright leather reins. There seemed to be a pole in the middle that turned to music.

The horses stopped, the ring emptied. Then I myself was lifted on to a horse, and given a stick with a hook at the end, doubly satisfying because it resembled the iron hoop stick that I had never been allowed to have. I could hold on to a pole, they said, but I was too big to be strapped, was I not? The old woman came round and collected dues, ten centimes, or perhaps twenty. Then the machinery and the music started, and we began our round, slowly at first and then swifter and swifter while we leaned forward, each time that we passed the throne, to snatch at rings, until our sticks became a pleasing jingle of sliding metal. A baby near me squealed, and it had a belt on too, how I despised it. I was astride a horse, a warrior at last. I lunged ferociously and after the first time or two the rings tightened and were hard to catch (there was some mechanism whereby the smaller children and the girls found them loose and easy to jerk off) until when we came slowly to an undesired stop I had tied with a boy much bigger than myself as winners of the greatest number. Solemnly we were offered sticks of pink and white and orange candy done up in paper. A remnant of my Anglo-nursery training persisted and I was about to shake my head when my governess nodded permission and I trotted off towards the Tuileries sucking the first lollipop of my life, earned, I felt too, in open combat. No wonder that after such an afternoon everything French seemed more desirable than my English experiences. It was the foundation of a feeling that I had all through childhood that England somehow was not quite "grown up". With the occasional exception of a travelling circus there were none of these adventures to meet one casually in England. The Champs Elysées nursery was an environment suited to my then development: it is interesting now to recall that I was introduced to it by a German.

I cannot remember that anyone laughed at me, in all my visits to France, or asked me if I were not too tiny to sit at such a large table and if I would not rather be back in my nursery, playing with dolls. Such incidents were all too common in England, where parents took their children away in an apologetic manner as if they expected someone to say, "she would be better in school." But in France the family travelled together as a matter of course and I am sure that my father thought of me as simply another adult added to our party. I knew at once that it was expected that I should be with my father and mother. Waiters and chambermaids treated me, in common with other French boys and girls, more as a person, never as a baby. It was assumed that I would not run about the restaurant, upset sauces or shout and somehow, because this was taken for granted, it happened. I had not the courage later to require a younger generation to sit still over a meal that might last two hours, but for myself I am glad that I had the training. I was spared through it, so much of the exterior agonies of growing up. Had I been ordered to be quiet, I am sure that I should have screamed.

But the certainty of the waiters that grown-up or child were alike and would behave in the same manner, disarmed me to obedience.

One of my earliest memories of Paris is the most powerful. It was a very hot afternoon and we sat upstairs in our hotel room with the windows open and the shades half-drawn. I had opened an abridged edition of *Robinson Crusoe*, only to be too disappointed to continue reading it. The hero wanted to go to sea and his relatives objected ; that was the normal beginning to any book. So was his first storm, although I felt that a voyage between ports in England hardly "counted". But when he had to man the pumps and was afraid, even said that it might be wrong to want to be a sailor, then, no matter what there might be of desert island to come, this was unspeakable treason and I flung the book away.

I looked down into the square below us for I had no other book. It was always crowded ; I wondered how so many horses could get through it at one time. Boys passed carrying the long, unfamiliar sticks of bread, enormous drays blocked the way of impatient, open carriages. The round stiff bowlers that the men wore shone in the heat and occasionally women crossed, holding a handful of skirt up in one hand, under doorway wide hats. It was a dull world this, I thought, where nothing ever happened. But sometime I would be a sailor in a ship and come to places where there would be live monkeys on coco-nut trees and beaches of coral shells.

Suddenly in the midst of this so ordinary afternoon, something began to happen. People ran, they hurried in groups from the side streets, carriages stopped, men cheered. On the opposite side, so far away that I could not see him distinctly, an old man came to the edge of a balcony. It was the first time that I heard the collective roar of a crowd. "Kruger is speaking," my father said, rushing into the room and unchecked, I thrust my head out of the open window.

I supposed that the people had come to take him prisoner. But they were silent for him when he held up his hand. After his first sentence, they began to cheer again.

I was puzzled and very angry. A few hours away Kruger was worse than an enemy, he was a traitor. (I cannot imagine where I got this impression, for my family was against war and kept the details of it away from me as much as possible. But pacifism has little to offer to the active child and the rifles, the flags in the streets, were far more potent aids to my imagination than a few calm words.) I looked round. Could I leave the room unperceived by my parents, crawl to the door on hands and knees perhaps, run down the long stairs, pass the concierge, and get out to the street ? But once there should I be able to work my way through the crowd before his speech was finished, would they let me in at Kruger's hotel or should I have to climb up outside on to his balcony ? Once face to face with him I knew I should be able to take him

prisoner. I did not stop to think that there would have been problems involved in taking him from a friendly land to Dover, but I did feel that in gratitude, England ought to let me be a soldier.

The square was now black with heads. I decided regretfully that I should have no chance of getting across the street and decided to shout instead derisive remarks in English. Fortunately for my family, the speech finished and Kruger stepped back into his room, while the streets rocked with shouts and acclamations. "But why is he free," I asked, "where are the soldiers?" "This is France," it was explained, "and France is not at war with South Africa."

This must have been in the spring of 1901, the year after the Exhibition ended, and it might have consoled me, for my failure, had I known that Isabelle Eberhardt¹ was at that very moment working as a docker in Marseilles, having been banished from Algeria for questioning the French handling of certain Arab problems. But my military enthusiasm was doomed in France to disappointment. A short time afterwards I saw men being marched down the street, between two lines of soldiers. They had on cockades of coloured ribbons, but even to my eyes, they looked sad. I supposed them to be prisoners. "There go the conscripts," people said; it was a new word and I had to ask the meaning. Something must be wrong with an army when boys had to be *forced* to join. It said *Liberté* on the inscriptions; why then did they have to live in barracks if they preferred to live at home? "If you were a French boy, you would have to serve," it was explained. But if I were French, I thought, I should fight to have the law changed or else run away. Except that of course I should want to be in a regiment myself. But fighting was an honour, it was not something bound up with regulations and schools. I was so puzzled that I began to wonder if a nation's words were sometimes different from its acts.

This was on a subsequent visit. My first trip ended at the station, among a crowd of men in long blue blouses and leather belts. I had already learned to call them "facteurs" and not porters. There were many travellers and the seats were crowded. An officer stood at the door of our compartment, talking to friends. I caught words like "Pekin" and "*les barbares*". "It is a French officer back from the Boxer troubles in China," my father whispered. I knew enough about China to feel that it was in a direct line from where we sat, but a long way off, whereas Africa was south, as if one walked downstairs. "But is there a war in China too?" I asked. I had not known that it was possible for there to be two wars at once. The explanations seemed strange. Why should England and France be joined to fight the Boxers?

¹ Isabelle Eberhardt, Russian by nationality but brought up at Geneva, came to Algeria and immediately devoted herself to a study of native conditions. She wrote many books, lived through many adventures. Exiled by the French, she worked in male clothes on the docks of Marseilles until she could return to Africa as a stowaway. She married an Arab, officer in one of the native regiments, but died a few years later from fever.

(and wasn't boxing a game), when they hated each other over the Boers ? It was too much to comprehend so I sat back in my seat and longed impatiently for the steamer.

It is the first memories that are important and so much of later life was to depend upon the influence of this journey. I was initiate, when I returned to build ships of pebbles on my English beach, I had knowledge. I had been born to the sea but I came back from Paris with some experience of the "land"; to my island sense was added perception of a continent. When I made my harbours out of seaweed I was dealing not with dream stuff but with facts; my horizon had widened, I had begun to think. This first contact with another civilisation cannot be underestimated for it came so early that it became part of my own life. Though my later way was to be in a different direction and in another country, it was in France that I first learned to be a European.

TWO SCHOOLS

(PARIS, 1937)

By SILVIA DOBSON

WHERE THE TOWN ends, chaos begins ;—slattern houses, badly-paved roads, grim factories, derelict fields ;—yet when we asked for the Karl Marx school of Villejuif, faces brightened and directions were explicit. It was interesting to question again and again because of the extraordinary response evoked.

“ This is our school, which we of the poorest district of Paris have built for our children. People from all over the world come to see it, because it was the first really modern school to be constructed in France,” is expressed in manner and word, and certainly one stares in amazement at the fine harmonious buildings with their simple lines and well-planned grounds ; symbol of the spirit of this progressive municipality.

Each class-room faces south and is tastefully decorated with modern furniture and excellent lighting ; the cloakrooms and offices are graded according to size, and have warm showers and plenty of accommodation ; an interesting feature is the hot air used for drying, in order to avoid contagion spread by towels. The huge gymnasium acts also as cinema and theatre, the sports ground is magnificent, and the medical rooms would grace any hospital.

Of special interest is the *école maternelle*, equivalent to our nursery schools, where sun, air, and sleep are major considerations and good health combines with happiness to make gay, contented children.

Monsieur Paul Vaillant-Couturier, Maire of Villejuif, said in his inaugural address, that he hoped the new school would develop a taste for collective life among the children and render instruction attractive by the very surroundings in which it was given.

To reach the Open Air school of Suresnes, we climbed out of the town to where houses gave place to gardens and a wood of little trees sloped up the hill-side while the road curved round it. Coming to the gates of the school, we walked in between fruit trees to see a group of beautiful buildings, set, like the glass palaces of fairy-tales, among green lawns and lovely gardens. To say the walls are blue and white, the floors rubber, and the furniture of tubular steel is to react into the wrong dimension ; vision is so perfectly wedded to design here, that one sees construction in abstract terms ; people's faces light up ; there is a sense of magic in the air ; one regrets one cannot be born again, to walk through these lovely rooms, splash in the pools under powerful warm sprays, work at smooth desks with bare feet on heated stone ; be examined in the cream-tiled medical room ; or eat at the delightful refectory tables.

There are long slopes instead of stairs, and each class-room has windows on three sides which fold right back to let in the maximum of air and sunshine. The kitchens are equipped with every labour-saving device, and the cloak-rooms are models of compactness. In the grounds is a map of the world about twenty feet high and of equal diameter ; one views it from a spiral slope, tracing continents and oceans as one passes. There are no walls, no locked doors, no dingy corners ; everything shines and glows as though the labour employed is inspired ; there is a sense of adventure in the air, anything might happen to the world when children who have felt its influence grow up and help to govern.

On account of the splendid work done in this district where four out of nine schools are modern, the mayor of Suresnes, Monsieur Henri Sellier, has been made Minister of Public Health in the Socialist Ministry.

Everyone who pronounces doom on our crumbling civilization should visit these schools and read the message they convey. The courageous foresight of the one and the exquisite sensibility of the other are tokens that vision has not perished from the earth.

THE "PARADISE"

By LOUIS GUILLOUX

(Translated by D. S. Bussy)

TRAVELLING CIRCUSES AND theatres used to camp occasionally on one of the open spaces of our town. They were prohibited places for the likes of us and we never entered them, save by favour or fraud. The only thing that fell to our lot was the contemplation of the booths themselves. Perhaps even then some sort of romantic imagination added to the attraction they had for me. What I liked so much about them was that they could be taken down and moved. But perhaps I am underrating the strength of the desire for movement which possessed me at that time and which made me think that the most decrepit circus caravan had a beauty comparable only to that of a sailing ship always ready to cut her moorings. Certain it is that I used to pass hours at a time gazing at a tarpaulin shed-covering, and I was able to extract from it a more ample pleasure, a pleasure more strictly mine, than the actual spectacle of what was going on inside could have given me. But what folly to write foot-notes upon love and attempt to resolve it into elements ! Concrete things, actual objects are for me the best reminders of what I have loved ; it is with these that my heart has been secretly entangled, in these that my love has been preserved, even when I imagined that I had forgotten everything about it. Objects seem to have a fraternal solicitude for negligent man.

As for me, I know how much of myself I have left in the worm-eaten wood of a circus van, how much of myself can be re-awakened by the smell of acetylene lamps, by the childish tinkling of an old barrel-organ. Chilled to the bone, my feet in the mud, my hands in my pockets, my head bare, I must have passed hours gazing at a tarpaulin covering with the ignorant fidelity of a lover for whom the mere fact of loving is sufficient happiness.

The arrival of a circus was an event which put the whole town in a turmoil, especially if it were one of the grand circuses which were accompanied by a menagerie, of real lions and panthers, whose whole troupe, mounted on camels and elephants, filed in procession through the town. The loveliest of the equestriennes pranced on horseback at the head of it with two pages on either side ; then came the band, and after the band a score or so of dancing Negroes who brandished their spears and assegais above their feathered heads and banged on their iron shields, yelling as they did so. After these came the Hindus, who preceded a coach adorned with flowers in which the Queen of the procession sat enthroned. A dwarf ran behind who looked like a rolling ball ; from time to time—for he was as lively and full of antics as a monkey—he walked on his hands or turned cartwheels.

The spectacle of this cavalcade, at any rate, we could have for nothing. But as soon as the troupe was inside, the lamps lighted on the little square and the woman who sold tickets settled in her little box-office, our entertainment came to an end. We might stay outside; nobody interfered with us. We listened in the dark to the sudden bursts of applause from the audience, at the sight no doubt of some fine feat of training, to the cries of amazement and horror at the most agonising moment of the Leap of Death . . . and then to the laughter when the clown made his appearance in the ring. Nothing made us stir—sniffing dogs that we were. The circus manager with his fat paunch, his cigar, his bowler hat, his riding boots, would take the air at the door and seemed to be thinking of something else—he was blasé.

On other occasions there were no cavalcade, no camels or panthers, no Negroes. Poorer companies came to give their shows in the open air. They would take place, with the permission of Monsieur le Commissaire de Police, on a corner of a public place on a summer's evening. At the cost of one or two half-pence one had a seat on the end of a bench in the front rows, with one's feet on the carpet which had been thrown down and on which—when the necessary sum had been collected and a kind-hearted person had at last contributed the final penny—we should see the girl in green tights leap lightly forward and perform with the hoops, and then the Strong Man, with a single pull, would lift the hundred-pound dumb-bells whose knobs, as big as the globe our schoolmaster used to teach us geography, had been shining before our wondering eyes at the foot of the horizontal bar. "You can judge for yourselves, ladies and gentlemen. Come and look for yourselves. If any gentleman in the audience is accustomed to the use of dumb-bells, I invite him to see whether these are made of cardboard!" So the head of the company shouted, striking the dumb-bells with the end of his cane. It was very rarely that a gentleman in the audience responded to the invitation. The crowd listened in silence to these lengthy preliminaries. Finally when the last penny was dropped into the collecting bag, the head, magnificent in his pink tights, flung down his cane, as if for a challenge, and exclaimed, "Strike up, band!" A shrill cornet would thereupon excruciate the night with a shriek like that of a bird being plucked alive, while an acrobat who had meanwhile been sitting on a packing-case in the corner, darted forward and went through a series of miraculous movements on the horizontal bar.

We all caught our breath at the sight of him turning, letting go the bar, catching it again in the air, and then, no one knew how, all in a jiffy, standing on it upright, with a smile on his lips and his little finger cocked, until a second later the *saut périlleux* landed him on the ground. But all that was a mere nothing. Just a little glimpse of what they could actually do, just a manner of unstiffening their joints before going on to business, to the "really sensational performances" which, the head

of the company shouted, were to come. And again he appealed to the connoisseurs among the audience, to those who understood such things, to see for themselves and persuade the incredulous.

How he insisted on the *bona fides* of his show, how he begged his audience to test it ! I couldn't know at that age that the meagreness of his apparatus, the very fact that his troupe performed in the open air and made their journeys from town to town in wretched vans, was in itself a bad mark, even in the eyes of spectators drawn from the lowest quarters of our town and quite as poor as the performers themselves. They slightly called them "tumbler" below their breath. And the tumblers all in vain trained themselves to perform the most unexpected and perilous feats, to display the most daring exhibitions of strength and skill ; they never succeeded, try as they might, in the feat, as difficult as any in their art, of destroying the suspicion, the fear, and even the contempt, of those who looked at them. No such thing, of course, struck me at the time. But when I go back in recollection to those evenings, I perceive how difficult it was to extract from the crowd the few pence so urgently, it is true, but so legitimately, so necessarily demanded. And it was not so much that the spectators were poor (though God knows they were) as that they thought that such spectacles were always paid well enough. Another proof of this is that they never, or rarely applauded, as if the "artist" who exhibited himself on a public place had not at least as much right as another, and for that very reason, to be encouraged ; they seemed to think that the conditions in which he worked made his work something for which he could have no liking, and upon which, therefore, the spectator looked down as a mere means of making money—or rather of extorting it. And yet it was quite evident that most of these travelling artists loved their work not merely for the profit (always wretched enough) which it might bring them, but for its own sake. The pride which many of them showed in their strength or suppleness was nothing but the healthy pride of a good craftsman who knows what it is, for instance, to work in wood, and loves his work.

Besides the pleasure which the spectacle itself gave me, there was added the fact that each of these men and women whom I saw performing stood in my eyes for an adventure. I too looked upon them as different from the others. But it was because I clothed them with a romantic destiny of which their wandering life seemed to me the proof, and of which I drew the elements from my reading and my dreams. I who had never left my native town (how could I have ?) was wonder-struck to think that those men and women there before me, whom I could gaze at, whom I should have been able to touch, those very men and women in flesh and blood had travelled over the whole world. For in all good faith and with the generosity of a dreamer, I did not doubt that it was over the roads of the whole wide world they had travelled and not only over those of France. I would have liked to look in their

eyes, to see if nothing remained in them of all the wonders they had beheld. It seemed to me, for instance, that to have crossed the Andes, as I did not doubt they must have done many a time, or to have seen Yokohama (though they had very likely never even heard its name) must have given their eyes a peculiar beauty, so rare and priceless, that I looked upon them as exceptional beings and beings exceptionally fortunate. The reality had no power to undeceive me. And yet their poverty was very obvious. As for the pains they took over their work, it did not contradict my dreams.

It was possible too, I thought, that great travellers as they were, they might also be escaped convicts, and after all, what was there to prove that the wiry little man who looked as if he were walking round the ring on his head, was not Colo, the faithful friend and companion of Vidocq whose adventures I read about with such passionate interest? He was certainly like him. Needless to say I gazed at him with admiration, so great was my affection for his fidelity and kindness, and for the courage and cleverness with which he had managed to escape from the convict prison at Brest—or was it from the one at Toulon?

"I appeal to your kind hearts, ladies and gentlemen, to your kind hearts! Just another penny or two so that the show may go on!" The head of the troupe was always appealing to our kind hearts, and extolling the merits of each of his artists, and insisting on the difficulty and danger and novelty of their performances. The cornet indefatigably serenaded the moon with its blares, while the girl in green tights went round with the bag. "To encourage the artists, ladies and gentlemen! Heaven will repay you!" Sometimes she would offer us a post-card souvenir, which no one ever bought. Who wanted a souvenir of these poor entertainers of a single evening?

Night came on. The people who were tired of standing had already left. The only ones to remain were the favoured few who had been able to afford a bench. Then I also was obliged to go home. Besides, it was over. "A very good night to everyone!" It was the head of the troupe speaking for the last time. The artists were already busy taking down the horizontal bar, clearing away the dumb-bells, rolling up the carpet. They had to be ready to start early in the morning in order to reach the next town before evening.

As for me, as I undressed to go to bed, I liked to fancy I was travelling with them. What would I not have given to sleep in the caravan, rocked by the trot of the horses! I had to creep into bed without making a noise or lighting a light for fear of waking up Grandfather. When would such an evening come round again? Sometimes an infinite period would elapse before the smallest opportunity for pleasure occurred, except perhaps a review on 14th July or a local fête with its sack-races and its Aunt Sallies.

But how gladly I would have given all such pleasures as these for one evening at the theatre!

(To be continued)

POETRY
THE SUN

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LIFTS HEAVILY
and cloud and the sea
weigh upon the
unwaiting air—

Hasteless
the silence is
divided
by small waves

that wash away
night whose wave
is without
sound and gone—

Old categories
slacken
memoryless—
weed and shells where

in the night
a high tide left
its mark
and block of half

burned wood washed
clean—
The slovenly bearded
rocks hiss—

Obscene refuse
charms
this modern shore—
Listen !

it is a sea-snail
singing—
Relax, relent—
the sun has climbed

the sand is
drying—Lie
by the broken boat—
the eel-grass

POETRY

bends
and is released
again—Go down, go
down past knowledge—

shelly lace—
among the rot
of children
screaming

their delight—
logged
in the penetrable
nothingness

whose heavy body
opens
to their leaps
without a wound—

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS.

“TIME FOR A QUICK ONE?”

NOT THE UNPALATABLE dishes set before us
of tedium and amusement, balanced diet
and quite enough to feed us and restore us
with strength to work, if work comes, and to quiet
while we are waiting ; not the feast of life,
spread thus, can really nourish.
Man and wife,
three children (B.M.A.) starve with a flourish.

What do we drink ? That's different. Pretty claret
(containing iron and coloured dark as blood,
deep blood, that is). No drink, this, for a garret-
supper and minimum calory-reckoned food ;
but blood's a fine drink ! Time for a quick one ? Just
time for a quick war, started
why ? “ Well, lust
distracts their minds and keeps them happy-hearted.”

VALENTINE ACKLAND.

POEM

THE SHAH

benumbed cats slide over the lawns
like streaming music

enters

poised on what o nothing in this contemporary world
the forms of his garden move
bulbs of wishes and swaying balloons of unrealisation flock
darkly about him they pray in the dark

their blue prayers in little fleets escape
into the heaven-flowing music's seas
an orange flower still burns like an old lamp
and a violet like smoke in a black rug

the shah perspires wishes
and prayers
unfolds regrets rests
on the waking dream

shadows coolly lie on his sensitive brain
darkening thought and washing with cold sound
him on the ground.

PHILIP O'CONNOR.

PLAINT

Before a Mob of 10,000 at Owensboro, Ky.

I, RAINEY BETHA, 22,
from the top branch of race-hatred look at you.
My limbs are bound, though boundless the bright sun
like my bright blood which had to run
into the orchard that excluded me :
Now I climb death's tree.
The pruning-hooks of many mouths
cut the black-leaved boughs.
The robins of my eyes hover where
sixteen leaves fall that were a prayer :
sixteen mouths are open wide,
the minutes like black cherries
drop from my shady side.
Oh, who is the forester must tend such a tree, Lord ?
Do angels pick the cherry-blood of folk like me, Lord ?

CHARLES HENRI FORD

RABBITS ON THE MIND

WHEN MICROBES TURN a somersault,
they risk their lives more than they ought,
and fly-tox slays the gallant fly,
but where go rabbits when they die ?

If they were in the habit of
drowning for unrequited love,
that would account for half the lot,
where then do scurry Flo and Dot ?

Granting the girls the right to mourn
and pine among the leaves of corn,
where do they hide to waste away
entirely from the light of day ?

Knowing the very amorous habits
attributed to many rabbits,
and seeing with my proper eyes,
thicker than fools or old folks' sighs :

rabbits, rabbits everywhere,
more thick than swallows in the air,
don't you wonder where they stretch
when Death strolls by and pulls the latch ?

Oh, poets inter their words in snares,
to tempt the love of maidens rare,
but not enough traps could there be
to catch my rabbit-thoughts of thee.

CHARLES HENRI FORD.

WAKING WE WALK SEPARATELY

THE BRIGHT ISLAND dreamed of
Beyond the eyes' long search

The waking breast stirring
Beneath the cupped hand asleep

All mornings past content
And night the cover turned for love

Out of every window of every awakening
The kind houses and trees

And the sad need given with violence
Snow-fall of winter and autumn rain

The cranes digging down in the cellars
And the men without work gazing into the pits

Travelling to far unfamiliar towns
And learning alien hills and flowers

Wanting one always who brings
Tenderness to the blood and trembling

Reaching the hand to touch the eyelids
The fingertips on the forehead and lips

Never knowing the answer nor when love
Fled leaving the illness upon the heart

WILLARD MAAS.

BLADES IN THE SLAG

THE DRYADS HAVE come out of the trees
After the fearful concealing from the steel,
Marching with fisted durance
Into the woods and innocent slopes of hills
That have turned their brooks into sour
Sluices with hate of coarse delving.
The cross of custom held us
And the cheating sparks of flying pleasure
Like the rich bribe of autumn on the trees.

Now the jolt of hunger
Sickens the breath—
Puts a shiver mortal in the pulse
And questions the little patina of sensations
Rattling over the pit.

We are so hungry who dwell in the coal-warrens
That we have forgotten the taste of manna
And suck in the cheeks proudly pauperizing
Or mumble the reeking lotus
Feeling the serpent totem tickling in the chest.
I shall find new gods amongst old tombs
Of the oak and the hazel and the gorse
And taste of the fierce torch of a scarlet flower
To feed a nursling Lucifer to save
These high-born ones of the minted citadel
Hurling them to seething floors of dissatisfaction
Whence they may win through the purgatories of art.

I spread my light into a passionate dawn
Over black deserts feeling the first sparse
Green spears
Of the earth-young children
Springing out of the furrows
To wage Beauty's terrible war
On the infidels of the rusty industry.
See the blades in the slag fanfaring
Like my brief words of fire quickening to daring.

KEN ETHERIDGE.

FIRST GRIEF

By FRANZ KAFKA

(Translated by Lilian F. Turner)

A TRAPEZE ARTIST—as is well known, this art, practised high up in the domes of great variety halls, is one of the most difficult to be attained by men—organised his life in such a way that he remained on the trapeze day and night as long as he performed in the same show. This was at first only the result of an ardent desire for perfection, though later of tyrannical habit as well. All his needs, which, by the way, were very small, were supplied by servants working in shifts, who waited on him from below, and drew everything that he required up and down in specially constructed vessels.

This way of life did not result in any particular difficulties for those around him; only, during the other “turns”, it was a little distracting that he, inevitably, remained up above, in full view, and that, in spite of his usually quiet demeanour on such occasions, people’s glances sometimes wandered up to him. But this the management forgave him, for he was so extraordinary an artist, and quite irreplaceable. Also, people realised, of course, that he did not live like this from caprice; but only by this means could he keep himself in permanent training and maintain his art in its perfection.

Yet it was quite healthy up above, and if, during the warmer season, the side windows in the whole round of the dome were pushed open, and the powerful sun and fresh air together penetrated into the dark interior, then it was even beautiful.

It is true that his human intercourse was somewhat restricted; only now and then a colleague from the gymnastic display would climb up to him by the rope-ladder; then they both sat on the trapeze and chatted, leaning against the ropes right and left. Or workmen repairing the roof would exchange a word or two with him through an open window; or a fireman inspecting the emergency lighting in the uppermost gallery shouted up a few respectful but scarcely audible words. Otherwise all was quiet around him; only, in the afternoon an employé sometimes found his way into the empty theatre and gazed thoughtfully up into the almost immeasurable height, where the trapeze artist, unconscious that he was being observed, practised his feats or rested.

In this way the trapeze artist could have lived undisturbed but for the inevitable journeys from place to place, which harassed him exceedingly. Great were the precautions of the manager to save the trapeze artist from every unnecessary prolongation of his sufferings.

For journeys through towns he had racing cars in which, at night if possible, or during the small hours of the morning, they could rush through the deserted streets with the utmost rapidity, though too slowly for the longing of the trapeze artist. He also reserved a whole compartment in the train, where the trapeze artist spent the journey in the luggage rack, in a pitiful but somehow appropriate makeshift for his customary mode of life. At the next place in which he was to perform the trapeze was already in its position in the theatre, long before the arrival of the trapeze artist ; moreover, all doors leading to the ring were opened, all gangways kept clear—but in spite of all these measures, it was always the most beautiful moment in the manager's life when the trapeze artist stepped on to the rope-ladder, and at last, in a flash, hung on his trapeze once more.

However many journeys the manager had already made successfully, each new one nevertheless perturbed him, and apart from everything else, the journeys in any case frayed the nerves of the trapeze artist.

Thus, they were travelling together once again : the trapeze artist lay dreaming in the luggage rack ; the manager leaned back in the opposite corner seat reading a book, when the trapeze artist softly addressed him. Immediately the manager was at his service. Biting his lips, the trapeze artist said that from now on he must always have two trapezes opposite one another for his acrobatics, instead of one, as hitherto. The manager consented at once. But as if to show that the manager's agreement in this matter was just as irrelevant as his refusal would have been, the trapeze artist said that in future he would never, under any circumstances, perform on one trapeze only. At the mere thought that it might perhaps happen again he seemed to shudder. Observing him uneasily, the manager reaffirmed his full agreement, remarking that two trapezes were better than one, and that, besides, this innovation would be a good thing, for it would add variety to the programme. At this point the trapeze artist suddenly began to cry. Deeply alarmed, the manager jumped up and asked what was the matter with him, and receiving no answer, he climbed on the seat, stroked him, and pressed the other's face to his own, so that the trapeze artist's tears flowed over him, too. But it was only after many questions and caresses that the trapeze artist exclaimed, through his sobs : " Only this one pole in my hands—how can I live, then ! " It was now easier for the manager to console the trapeze artist : he promised to wire about the second trapeze from the next station to the place where they were giving their next performance. He reproached himself for having allowed the trapeze artist to work for so long on only one trapeze, thanked him, and praised him highly for having at last drawn his attention to the mistake. In this way the manager succeeded in slowly calming the trapeze artist, and could go back to his corner. But he himself was not at all easy. With deep misgivings, he surreptitiously

looked at the trapeze artist over the top of his book. If such thoughts had begun to vex him, would they ever wholly cease? Would they not always grow greater? Did they not endanger his existence? And the manager really believed that he saw how, even now, in the apparently peaceful sleep in which the fit of weeping had ended, that the first wrinkles were beginning to mark the smooth child-like forehead of the trapeze artist.

THE HUNDRED-YEAR-OLD GLADIATOR

By JEAN CASSOU

(Translated by C. A. Whitehouse)

THE FIRST PART of the programme was devoted to the throwing of Christians to the wild beasts. The young barbarian was not to appear until the end of the day. Thus as he waited behind the scenes he had ample time for those meditations which he had good reason to consider would probably be his last. As he sat at the foot of the wall in this underground passage which on all sides oozed blood and dampness, his fingers tightened their grip on the long wide sword with which he was presently to defend himself against his adversary's trident and net. It was his first appearance in an arena—and possibly the last. He envied those of his companions, fellow prisoners of war, whose calmer though less brilliant lot was to be that of ordinary slaves, attached to some good middle-class family where they would at least have a chance of finding a comfortable corner until their declining years. But he was sitting there with a throbbing heart, unnoticed. The other gladiators—and among them doubtless his future opponent—were chatting together and using technical expressions which he did not in the least understand, or walking up and down, showing off their muscles, tapping their breast-plates, trying on cuirasses and knee-guards. Several society youths, amateurs of this kind of sport, mingled with the gladiators and discussed with them their respective chances.

One can easily imagine the young novice's thoughts, his anguished confusion of mind, and the poignancy with which the scenes of his native forests flashed across his mind in the intervals of black despair.

He remembered especially that strange day when he had met a curious, haughty, yet abandoned young woman, as she sat in her wooden hut by the lonely fireside. There, entranced by her white skin, he had spent long hours in an atmosphere suffused with smoke and metal. And they had drunk from the same cup. Now he saw once more her fair face beneath its mop of auburn hair, and her mouth with its thick lower lip which protruded as though it sought to prevent some secret from escaping. He recalled every detail of their encounter: how, at the moment of separation, she had accompanied him to the birch tree which grew in front of the hut: how he had asked her what she was going to do when he was gone. He had feared she would grieve for him. For she had only her fireside and the birch tree, and he could not bear the idea of her living there alone and going

from the fireside to the birch tree, and from the birch tree to the fireside, thinking about him, always thinking about him, and addressing her prayers to the fire and then to the moon. Then she had smiled disdainfully. But he had said, "Do not think that there is the least bit of foolish boasting in what I say, for I do not know why you love me. I think that if another warrior of my age and prowess had passed by your hut that evening you would have given yourself to him. It was just an extraordinary hour in an extraordinary day of the world's history, and the Fates decreed that we two should meet at that hour. But that is passed and over, and now I must go, and you must remain. But henceforward I have but one object in view, and that is to return here again, victor or vanquished--nay, dead or alive--and then I shall carry you off for ever."

He had seen her strange lips part, no longer in a scornful smile, but to pour forth words of which he could only remember the sound and not the sense, so ardently and swiftly did they flow.

And now he was breaking his promise and was being dragged into a new current of events, and into a profession he had never dreamt of entering and which he would surely never exercise for long.

He lifted his eyes. His sword weighed heavily in his clammy hands. He put it down beside him, stretched his bare frame and stood up. Outside could be heard the shouts of the people, the hymns of the Christians, and the snarling of the wild beasts. The young barbarian took a few steps towards a beam of sunlight which was filtering in from the arena and which he could not contemplate without an unbearable trembling in all his limbs. Then he returned to his corner and sat down again, burying his head in his hands.

Once more he saw his lover with her auburn hair. It was monstrous to think of all that separated her from him now--to think that he had to prepare for this butchery, lay down his life and disappear. And all the while she was thinking of him, and sitting at the foot of the birch tree which was as white as her body, and behind her was the door of the hut and the light of the dying fire. Why then had he passed that way when Fate had already decreed that he should die?

But he must perforce tear his thoughts away from this memory and pay some attention to what was going on around him. Perhaps he was not going to die in this first trial? Perhaps the Gods would relent?

Just then he felt a hand on his shoulder and he looked round. A bald old man, withered and sunburnt, had sat down near him and was looking at him affectionately.

"Hail! my son," said the old man. "Doubtless this is your first combat, and that is why I find you alone and preoccupied? It is not a bad profession, though. You will soon see."

"What shall I see?" asked the other, hesitantly.

"A gladiator has much to see in the course of his career," the old

man replied. "Be assured that I am far wiser than many men of letters. I was your age when I began . . ."

"My age?"

"Why yes, your age. Since then they have frequently offered to set me free, and I have always refused. I like my profession too well. Besides, what else could I do? I was always a gladiator, and gladiator I shall remain. And I have worn pretty well, have I not? How old do you think I am?"

"Well," said the young man, doubtfully.

"Look at me carefully," said the old man. "It is my birthday to-day. I am a hundred years old."

"Ah!" exclaimed the young man. "That is a fine age to be. How did you manage it?"

"Believe me," said the old man, "it is my profession that keeps me going."

"A hundred years old!" repeated the other. "A hundred years old! O venerable father, let me kiss your hand! Truly, in a hundred years one must see a variety of things and learn how to deal with them all."

"I have seen more than I have done. Do? What do you want to do? You have a magnificent profession, a very interesting one. You'll soon see. You have only to exercise it calmly and pray to the gods to protect you as long as possible. You will take part in the games on an average once a month—sometimes less. That will depend on current politics. The rest of the time you are fed and cared for. At night you can go out Suburra way, and do the round of the wine-shops, play dice or morra, and fall in love with the women. And what women too!"

He leant forward and whispered in the young barbarian's ear—

"The Empress . . ."

"No!" exclaimed the young man, his eyes wide open with astonishment.

"Why, I knew one who . . ."

"One what?"

"One empress, whose greatest pleasure was to put a mask in the shape of an ass on my head and make me crawl round on all fours! Well, you can be an ass too! One does a number of things to make a living. After that she would cover me with garlands of roses. Ah! That makes you think, that does. Garlands of roses, eh? . . . You smile? Ah me! Youth, youth. . . . But seriously, I want to take you under my wing and help you. I am beginning to feel my years and have surely not much longer to live. It would give me pleasure to bequeath you some of my knowledge. I see by your arms that they have put you with the mirmillons. That's not so bad. I was with them for twelve years or so. At present I'm a retiarius."

"And which do you prefer?" the young man asked, eagerly.

"Oh well! The risks are about the same. You see, it really doesn't make much difference to me—net or sword—I've always beaten my opponent and . . ."

"Each time you've killed him?"

"Each time," replied the old gladiator.

"I thought that occasionally Cæsar or the public ordained that the vanquished should be spared."

"In theory, they have the right to," the old man said, "but in practice they never do."

"Ah!" murmured the young man.

"In any case," the other went on, in a peremptory tone, "I've never seen it happen."

Then he shrugged his shoulders and said: "Perhaps once or twice under Marcus Aurelius it was done. Anyway, there were very few public games at that time. The emperor didn't like them. He was very soft-hearted."

"But what about the people?" asked the young barbarian. "Didn't they want some amusement?"

"Oh well! There were always the Christians to provide that," was the reply.

Both were silent for a moment, wrapped in thought. At last the old man murmured: "Of course, it is rather horrible having to cut your comrade's throat. But you get used to it. And then, you see, once he's in the arena he's no longer your comrade!"

After a pause he went on: "I should say that you've natural ability for fighting, and that you've got what I might call 'arena-sense'. Either you have it, or you haven't. And I think you've got it all right, in spite of your attack of nerves. Why, nerves mean nothing at all. I've known several famous gladiators who used to be afflicted with them every time they entered the arena. That didn't stop them making a success of their job. Would you like an onion?"

He had produced some onions from a wallet that lay beside him and began to munch one as he proffered another to his young interrogator. The latter hesitated.

"Oh! That won't overload your stomach," the old man said, encouragingly. "Of course, it is better not to eat or drink anything before going on, but onions are very digestible. Are you sure you won't have one?"

"Quite, thank you," the young man replied, decisively, "if you'll excuse me, father."

"That's all right," the other answered, with indulgence.

And he finished his onion, then got up and said, "Come here, my son. I am going to give you some golden advice. Stand over there and listen.

"Never make a pass on the left side of the retiarius. You see, it's from that side that with a little flick of his right wrist he can fling out his net. Then, if you see the net over your head, don't get scared. Just twirl your sword like this . . . See? . . . Do it again . . . That's right. With these two principles and a little experience you'll come through all right."

"And live to be a hundred?" asked the young man with a smile. And he thought to himself: "All right then! I shall defend myself, just as the old man has told me. I shall defend myself with all my might and main, and I shall carve myself a destiny in spite of everything. And all for my auburn-haired woman over yonder!"

His eyes gleamed. He brandished his sword round his head and made it whirl as if to rend in its flight some imaginary net.

"Keep calm!" cried the old gladiator. "It isn't good to tire yourself before a fight."

He seized him by the shoulder and made him sit down again, right by his side. The young man recoiled. Really! That smell of onion was most unpleasant. Yet the old man was so affectionate, so paternal.

"Why," thought the young man, as he pursued his dreams, "even if I hadn't the memory of my lover in the forest, the prospects here would amply suffice. But I have met my love, and there is no drawing back. She has such eyes, and such a glowing hearth. If this old man sees my joy he will never know that something else besides the joy of being a gladiator lies concealed. And thus shall I live to be the youngest and most daring of gladiators, and then men will say, 'Oh! What a fine gladiator! There's a fine gladiator!' And I shall think to myself . . . Ah yes! . . . I know what I shall be thinking. . . ."

He turned to his ancient companion and said, "How kind you are, father!"

"Ah! Youth, youth!" sighed the other. "If only I were your age! If only I were going into the arena for my first combat! But I've seen too much, I can tell you!"

"You must know the whole of Roman history," murmured the young man, admiringly.

"The whole of it, my son."

"You must have seen lots of Roman emperors?"

"Roman emperors!" the old man exclaimed. "Have I seen lots of Roman emperors? Huh! I should just say I have! All kinds and conditions. Handsome, ugly, mad, wise, emperors with warts and without warts, stupid emperors and clever ones! Nero, for example, who invented human torches and rides in boats that used to upset. . . . And Vespasian, who invented . . . well you know what he invented! And Augustus and Septimus Severus, and Marcus Aurelius, whom I mentioned just now—who wrote in Greek. And that other emperor, who used to weep—what was his name?—Oh well! I've forgotten

for the moment. . . . And then there was old Vitellius, who only thought about stuffing himself with food. He was a real pig! Always munching something. At the arena, during the interval, his box was besieged by hordes of orange sellers and acid-drop vendors! . . .

"And now they're all dead, and here am I with a hundred years to my account. Don't you feel envious?"

"I do, indeed, father," said the young barbarian, claspings his sword tightly in his hands. "I want to follow your example. I too want to live to be a hundred."

And in spite of the smell of onions, he allowed the old man to embrace him. Both trembled in sympathy.

"Do try to live a long time yet," persuaded the young man, "for I want you to be a father to me and let me serve you. Please go on living! Centenarians do not usually live much longer once they have reached a hundred. But you are such an extraordinary man; you simply must go on living!"

"I shall try to," sighed the old fellow.

And they sat there together, side by side, lost in their emotion, until a gong sounded. The first part of the programme had ended. The lions had finished eating up the Christians, and now they were coming back behind the scenes, replete and somnolent, their ferocity spent. An enormous old lion led the way, licking his chops. Then the tigers and panthers padded heavily after. All these animals returned docilely to their cages, to sleep the sweet sleep of duty done and digestion yet to be accomplished.

"Now it is our turn," said the old man, rising to his feet. And as the young barbarian was trembling, he added, "Come, my boy! Take heart! It will soon be over. We shall empty a good few bottles together this evening. The gods have woven a glorious destiny for you, of that I feel sure!"

The chief steward of the arena approached.

"Hail!" He greeted the veteran, clapping him on the shoulder. "Feeling up to the mark? Good. This young fellow is to be your opponent. Mind you don't tire him out!"

"Alas!" exclaimed the old man, putting his hand to his head. "Can't you find me some other opponent? I'm fond of this youth and . . ."

"Don't you know by now that my orders are not to be questioned?" asked the steward in surprise. "Please do as you're told."

Attendants had already closed in upon the two friends, putting a metal shield on the old man's left arm, the trident and net in his hands, and compelling the young barbarian to don his armour. The old man ground his teeth with rage. The novice eyed him in despair. Nevertheless, he was forced into the armour and felt his limbs grow heavy beneath its weight. His head seemed completely crushed by the

enormous helmet, adorned with a fish. Around him there was a deafening din, a clanking of cuirasses, a tumult of shouting. They were whipping those unfortunates who lay cringing with fright against the walls, refusing to be armed, and who finally allowed themselves to be dragged into the arena. He, too, thought of resisting. In such untoward and unexpected circumstances one might surely implore for mercy. And even if these men were impervious to pity, perhaps the gods . . . He was on the point of crying out. But suddenly everything was blotted out as they closed the vizier of his helmet. He shook his head and finally found the slots through which to see and breathe. His future adversary was standing stiffly before him, and his eyes were full of tears.

"Remember, my boy," he murmured, "all I've told you. Never make a pass on the left. . . ."

"Father!" the young man groaned. But his voice was lost in the black depths of his helmet, and they pushed him into the arena.

He stood there in the middle, in the hot sunshine. He was surrounded by an awful emptiness, and beyond and around this emptiness there was a stupendous din. . . . Never make a pass on the left. . . . He advances. He senses the old man running round the arena, calling after him insidiously. And he in turn begins to run, but is soon checked by the weight of his armour. Then he turns on his tracks. The old man calls out. Horrible old man! He is bare, red, and withered and must be killed at all costs. Slowly he walks towards the centenarian, sideways, like a crab. He raises his sword. The old man chants a droning, syren-like song, and brandishes his net round his head, then darts out of range. The crowd laughs, makes cat-calls, and claps its hands. For that noise in the distance is the crowd, and the young mirmillon begins to distinguish the sound of voices, and can now almost discern the shapes of faces. . . . And over there the small, skinny centenarian is hopping about. The young man rushes at him.

The unassailable old man is immediately at the other end of the arena. He seems to be everywhere at once. He is constantly out of range of the two little holes in the younger man's helmet; then he reappears, sometimes from the left, sometimes from the right. . . . How much longer is this torture going to last? The young barbarian wants to cry "Father! Father!" The blood pulsates in his temples. Never has he held so heavy a sword, and never has he felt less confident. Yet he lifts his weapon and whirls it round his head. Then a shadow suddenly passes before his eyes, like the flight of a black eagle. He struggles wildly, falls, and rolls over on the ground as fast as he can. . . . Now everything seems light—lighter even than that wicked net which he strives to break in his hands, as, with clenched teeth, he writhes like a clumsy tortoise inside the heavy armour that chains him captive and into which he suddenly crumples, broken and exhausted. The

trident scrapes his cuirass, a relentless foot presses down on his chest and stops his heart beating. And slowly his vizier falls back, revealing, like a curtain drawn apart, the old man's face poised high above him, and beyond, a huge, blinding sky encircling the serried ranks of the hushed crowd.

The old man's eyes shine over his own. The young man's lips tremble. He is going to beg for mercy. But the old man looks so pityingly at him that he lays silent and stares up, fixedly, horribly. Then the old man lowers his gaze and his face resumes its normal appearance. Now it is an expressionless mask that turns towards the crowd and awaits the verdict.

Over there in the emperor's box an arm is raised, and the thumb is pointed down. The entire crowd lets forth a shriek of joy. Once more the young man sees the veteran's face bent over his own. His heart flutters as he tries to sink further into the earth to avoid the foot which is weighing on him, more relentlessly than ever. The old man has taken a dagger from his belt. He leans once more over the young barbarian and crushes him still harder beneath his foot, crushes him with might and main, bends over again, seeks with the point of his dagger the gap between helmet and cuirass—there where the white throat of his adversary lies revealed. He peers into the young man's face, raises his arm, and drives the dagger deep into his throat.

THE DROUGHT BREAKS

By SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER

RAFAELA PEREZ WENT a step or two into the street, pulling her shawl closer around her. A drizzling rain fell out of the winter sky, by midnight that rain would be snow. A cat came along, nosing in the gutters. It would not find much there, this was a poor street and the poor had no food to throw away.

In the rich quarter there was feasting and waste. The German soldiers, the Italian soldiers, were eating as they had not eaten for years. Last week a German lieutenant, tipsy, very affable, had said to her in his halting, clumsy syllables, "Spain, fine country. Much eating, much wine. Pouf!" And he had distended himself, and thumped his stomach, smiling candidly, showing his bright young teeth. "*De nada*," she had said—"It's nothing"—the conventional phrase with which one puts off a thanks or a commendation. For it did not do to give no answer at all, one must at all costs seem civil to these invaders. And she had gone on scrubbing the floor of the café, wringing out the cloth stinking of chloride of lime.

Now the cat was licking up rain-water. It would not find anything else, drink water if one can fill the belly no other way. Curious to think at all about a cat, curious to be so attentive to a grey cat slinking through the grey dusk. Ah, but life was so empty, so hideously empty, one would think of anything now, of a cat, of a cobweb.

Two days after the town was taken by the Nationalists her husband had been shot. They had not even troubled to find the gun in the chimney, the bullets padded in the mattress. His Trades Union card had been enough. One glance at it, and they were driving him out of the house, up the narrow street towards the church. A dozen other similar groups converged thither: a man, struggling, or walking in silence (Diego had walked demurely, without a word, without a glance back), and about him the soldiers and Civil Guards, and, trailing after, a woman, two women, a woman with her children. There, by the church, the firing squad was waiting, trim and powerful. And so—and so—the men were lined up against the wall, and the word was given to fire.

The bloodstains were still on the church wall and the flies buzzing round them when the church was solemnly re-sanctified. New confessionals, new hangings, new pictures and images, arrived in furniture vans and were carried in. Then had come the procession, soldiers and choir-boys, the bishop under a canopy, priests and gentlefolk and more soldiers. They, the people of the quarter, must kneel on the cobbles while the procession went by. Inside the church everything was smart and fresh, there was a smell of incense and of flowers and of varnish

from the new confessionals. Outside there was the stain of blood and the smell of blood. The religious people came clustering and buzzing back as fast as bluebottles, as though they, too, came wherever there was a smell of blood. And now, more than ever, it was impossible to escape them, impossible to say them nay, whether they came demanding alms or children.

If one's husband had been shot, then one's children must be taken also.

"Holy Church," said the Reverend Mother, her black robes seeming to fill the room, her eyebrows bristling, "Holy Church will not leave these innocents where they can be contaminated. You have three children, I think. See that they are ready by eight to-morrow morning."

The convent was far away, at the other end of the town, a heavy building with barred windows, a garden surrounded by a high wall topped with spikes. For many days the mothers of the lost children haunted there, hanging about, watching the barred windows and the spiked wall; for though there was no chance of seeing the children one might perhaps hear a voice on the other side of the wall. But there were never any voices. Twice a day one could hear a clatter of small feet, marching, marching. And so, after a time, one lost hope, did not go so often, did not go at all.

Every week the nuns came round to collect the money. They knew to a peseta how much one earned. "Your children are well. They want no other mother than the Mother of God. But they cannot be kept for nothing. We ask you in the name of the Lord and his little ones." Then the hand would glide out of the sleeve and the downcast eyes would scan the pesetas.

From the loud-speaker further up the street came the accustomed sound of the hour. A drunken vaunting voice, Queipo de Llano's, saying that Madrid would fall in a couple of days, that Valencia had been bombed, that the Catalans would not fight, that everywhere the Reds were falling back, without food, without arms, without hope. Then would come the singing, and the shouts of *Arriba España!*

It was four months and twenty-one days since the children had been taken away, and now she was standing in the rain, looking at a cat—no, looking where the cat had been, for it had long ago sneaked on its way. The street was dark and silent, as though dead. Indeed, it was half-dead, depopulated. This neighbour dead, that neighbour in prison, that neighbour gone off. People would be there in the evening, and in the morning they would have disappeared, leaving no word, no trace.

The wireless brayed on, presently there would be the national music, humstrum of guitars, snap of castanets. In the cafés of the rich quarter the foreigners would lean back in their chairs, wag their heads, stir their haunches, eye the prostitutes trailing past, say to themselves, "We are in Spain."

Later still, a noise not broadcast, there would be cries, hooting laughter, rattle of a volley. Every night, even now, they were shooting in the prisons.

In the Calle de Rosas no one stirred. Those who were left in the tall houses sat, cold and scattered, like the last leaves on a winter tree. The houses were so much colder, being half-empty : no steps on the stairs, no smells of cooking, never a laugh or a song, not even a quarrel to liven up the air.

She shook her head and sighed. Like an echo there came the noise of the wind awaking in the mountains.

The voice on the wireless bragged on. Madrid had again been bombed, a sally of the Reds had been wiped out with great slaughter, five hundred prisoners had been taken on the Basque front, an ammunition dump had blown up. One did not listen, but yet one heard. One did not look at the placards, but yet one saw. One pulled one's shawl over one's ears, turned away one's eyes ; yet through one's mind marched the newly-arrived battalions, one saw their grand equipment, one heard their strong marching and the words of command shouted in foreign tongues. A scrap of newspaper, wrapped round a bit of salt fish or a handful of olives, jabbed at one's eyes with a threat or a sneer.

And yet Diego had said that it was good to know how to read, good to take an interest in the affairs of the country.

Sometimes out of her stagnating cold misery a flash of rancour would explode like a marsh-gas. If Diego had been content to work and to eat, like other men !—then, though this had come, though there had been hunger and cold and terror, there would still have been husband and children, a clue to living ; and the church wall would have been only what it had been, a wall much thicker than those of the flimsy tenements around it.

The wind was rising, desolate among the stone crags. *Arriba España !* chorused the voices on the wireless, a wolfish pack-howling. Overhead a window opened softly, a head peered out.

“ Rafaela ! Is that you ? What is it, what are you waiting for ? ”

“ Nothing.”

Without comment the head withdrew, the window was closed again. There was nothing to wait for. She must go in, chew her slow supper, lie down cold on the bed. The wind blew stronger, its voice among the mountains trembled with intensity, it was like a wild singer. The wind throbbed, came closer with its throbbing voice.

Ah ! What was that ?—that rending crash of sound, and after-rattle, and another and another crash ? What were these jarring wings over the city ?

Windows opened, doors opened, the street was full of voices. Blind Adela was wailing. “ It's them ! Mother of God, it's them ! They're going to bomb us now ! ”

“ No ! It’s us, it’s us ! They’re *ours* ! ”

She tore off the dripping shawl, waved it upwards in greeting, turning up her face, her heart, to the death falling from the air, as though to a greeting from the dead, as though to a greeting from life.

All around were voices, voices hushed, broken, excited ; gasps, cries caught back, questions and exclamations. It was like the noise of earth, thirsty with long drought, clucking with parched lips as it drinks the rain.

HEART'S DESIRE

By NATHAN ASCH

THE FIRST TIME I saw Leslie Squires was during the war in the criminology class at Squires College. In the Liberal Arts School criminology was a cinch course, and all the football men and all the other athletes with *S*'s on their sweaters, and all the men who lived up on the swanky Hill and had Mercer speedsters and diddled through their four years of college, took this course during the sophomore year, arrived in the lecture hall at eleven, settled in their chairs, put their elbows on the armchairs before them, thoughtfully covered their eyes with their upraised hands and slept, while the lecturer explained that there were four kinds of criminals, and showed charts to prove it. The class stared through the windows at the sunny town of Squires beneath, yawned without shame, caught up with correspondence, made pencilled patterns out of notes. When the gong sounded, without letting the lecturer even finish his sentence, the class loudly gathered up its papers and loudly rose and loudly conversing walked out of the door. The lecture-room was empty but for the sun still streaming through the windows, the litter evidences of a class just out, the lecturer who was putting away his glasses, and a curly black-haired figure sitting in his front-row chair and busily writing notes in a little book. I was just walking out when the figure lifted his head and stared absent-mindedly at me, and suddenly his eye nervously winked at me.

Thinking of Leslie Squires now, I mostly remember the twitching of his eye. He suffered from the tic ; we talked about it ; later, when people fashionably analysed their psyches, Leslie said that perhaps an analysis would help him ; only he really did not suffer ; he was not aware of the muscular contraction and, if aware, he was used to it, as one gets used to a wooden leg or to a lingering illness in someone one loves ; and besides, and this is really the reason why he never tried to cure himself, he considered it a self-indulgence to spend so much money on his own despised self. We weren't together many times in all the years I knew him : he went to law school ; he married ; he administered the estate ; while I went on Wall Street, and then I started to write and my friends were writers. Leslie had no friends ; he had female relatives living in the town of Squires where the Squires works were, but after the four years at Cambridge he never went back ; he came down to New York and lived, with all the millions that his father left, in a little apartment in Brooklyn. There are friendships and there are perhaps even loves that feed on very little, that consist, the whole relationship, of two people who had met and liked each other years ago meeting suddenly again in a west-bound train, and spending hours passionately talking, passionately knowing one another and loving one

another, and then the conductor calls out : " This is Cleveland," and the two friends shake hands and go apart, to see each other again, to fall in each other's arms, years later in a hotel elevator in mid-town New York. This was the sort of friendship that Leslie and I had. I don't remember what happened in that classroom eighteen years ago after he looked up and winked his eye at me, nor when we became friends. Maybe we walked out together and down the Hill towards the town where he lived with an aunt and where I had an afternoon job in a shoe store ; maybe we went down to Joe's for a cup of coffee. I don't remember again until the field trip the criminology class took to Auburn prison ; it was a lark, there were a lot of people who went down to the prison who were enrolled in the forestry school and in the engineering college. The class became about two hundred strong, and we went in buses ; and I remember the celled air that smelled of rubber, and the white eyeballs of the prisoners, and the lunch they gave us in the prison mess-hall, beans on tin plates ; it all smelled of rubber ; and then we went into the execution chamber, which had not been used in years, and saw the squat wooden chair in the centre of the grey floor. The wires were disconnected and hung useless from the helmet overhead ; the walls were neglected, dirty ; it was a sight of a horror past, and we were moved rather more by the story of something that once had happened than by the real awfulness of it ; it was like a horrible book one read : reality removed by distance and by time ; we stood and somebody nervously sniggered, and then a voice called out—it was Leslie Squires' voice :

" Is there any objection to my sitting in it ? "

Of course, then everybody had to sit in the electric chair and have the helmet adjusted over his head or her head, because there were also co-eds in that class ; and Leslie became a sort of hero for the day. It was very curious that by far the richest student at Squires, one after whose great-grandfather the school had been named, whose grandfather had given the Squires Chapel, and whose father has supplied half the money for the Squires Stadium, was completely unknown in that school for four years : no co-ed set her cap for him, the Chancellor never invited him to his home. Perhaps the reason was that Squires' fortune had been funded ; no one of that name was director at the factory, nor at the Squires National Bank. It was all run by a board of trustees who perpetuated themselves, and when, later, Leslie had three telephone numbers in the book, his residence, his office as a lawyer, and the number of the Leslie Squires Estate, it all meant very little. I think he was paid a salary for coming to the Estate office and nervously fiddling his thumbs and twitching his eye. The colossal quarterly check was deposited in the bank, and then I suppose after the pittance Leslie had used for expenses had been deducted, what was left was again invested, to make of Leslie Squires again a richer man.

I suppose, if he had wanted to, he could have run the Works ; a place would have been found for him at the plant in Squires ; he could have either traditionally started shovelling trash in the factory yard, and have been pushed through the various departments, to emerge a year later assistant to the president ; or he could have been made assistant right away. But this was not what he wanted. He could have become a connoisseur of art. I remember for a while during his last year in college he was interested in the great Florentine princely families, while I was interested in Aretino, and we argued. He bought German reproductions of El Greco and of Goya, and their sombreness darkened and depressed his room at his aunt's house that was already depressed by generations of accumulated furniture. He became interested in Croce and in æsthetic criticism. But when a poetry society was formed at Squires and it was decided to start a magazine, and at the organisation meeting the question of money came up and everyone contributed what he could, Leslie promised five dollars, and never again attended a meeting.

The tic never left him, and that was not what he wanted. Nor could drink have probably given him oblivion. Squires was considered a drinking college, and the town was known as an open town. There was a section near the freight yards and the Squires Works that during the day seemed a warehouse district with hardly a pedestrian and never a woman, that at night became dotted with red and shadowed with loitering, strolling figures and resounded with soft calling voices and the music of player-pianos. The boys from up on the Hill sometimes had parties there, and each year there was at the college a scandal that ended with warnings and with expulsions. We once went down there too and we drank beer and were frightened at first and uninterested later and quiet on our way back home. That was what none of us wanted.

What did we want ? At first I wanted to go on Wall Street ; and once Leslie offered to get me a job there. He never did ; a job as messenger-boy in one of the conservative houses seemed to require as many preliminary steps and diplomatic overtures and waiting in ante-rooms and heart-to-heart conversations with bankers and brokers as probably are required during a peace conference. I only thought I wanted to go on Wall Street and so much preparations seemed an awful waste. I got a job with a shady broker and saw the disreputable side of the Street. Whenever I wanted to see the Rock of Gibraltar side, I could go down to the office of the Leslie Squires Estate and see the whiskers of the Founder framed behind glass, see the old trembling man who was a runner there, see the black coats and the stand-up collars in the summer-time, hear the discreet murmurs over the telephone, and now and then pick up the sound of a staggering number of dollars. Most of all I could see the symbol of it all, Leslie Squires, on summer vacation from the Harvard Law School, the shabbiest man there and the only one altogether unhappy. He twitched his eye at me and he got his hat and

he walked out of the office, no one looking at him, out into the hall, got into the mobbed elevator, the most inferior man there, and out into the sun that made his face seem livid, and we walked to the Bean Pot on Greenwich Street, and we ate Boston beans and brown bread and milk.

What did he want ? I looked at him and didn't know. Why was he unhappy ? What was his fault and what did he blame himself for ? Why, when he spoke, was it always in my terms, from my point of view ? I worried about having no money, about bills to pay, and knowing that nothing on earth would ever induce him to offer to help, and knowing him well, I told him of these troubles. And he sympathised and, I think, genuinely worried with me, wondered how I could get released from my obligations. But really it was ridiculous for a man whose estate was one of the largest in America, who owned factories and a bank and mines out West, and practically all the real estate in the town of Squires, and thousands of shares of stock and bonds of foreign governments, who in the office that administered only his estate employed some fifteen people, to worry because I had trouble in paying my rent ; it would have been just as ridiculous if I had worried because one obscure company out of the dozens he owned could not pay its note at the bank. Yet I know he worried—more, he suffered ; I could see it by the nervous tic in his eye, by the concentration with which he tried to find a solution to my problems. At that moment it was he who could not pay his rent ; and sitting with me in the little white-tiled lunchroom and nervously trying not to catch the waiter's contemptuous eyes, who knew he would only get a nickel from him as a tip, he seemed a man completely alone and homeless, the most hopeless, the man with less security than anyone I have ever known.

* * *

I knew his wife but slightly, but then I think Leslie too knew his own wife but slightly. Hadley was an athletic-looking girl, a little taller and much bigger than he, with thick brown hair the texture of a horse's hair. She played tennis marvellously well and was not interested in much else. She came of a professional family in Squires, I think her father and grandfather had been physicians to Leslie's parents, and all of his life as a child he must have seen this healthy-looking girl with strong ankles and long, thick legs. Hadley had the trick of looking you straight into the eyes, almost completely inside of you, and smiling widely and shaking your hand in a manly way ; and for a moment you thought, this woman gives herself completely to you as a friend, she has tenderness and a smiling kindness ; you surrendered to her beautifully-toothed smile ; and then, talking to her, you became aware that there was nothing behind that smile but teeth. Hadley smiled because her father had smiled whenever he had called on the mighty Squires, or some of the other great emerging families in that industrial town. Hadley smiled because it is sporting to smile whether you win or lose

in a tennis match. Hadley smiled because she had beautiful teeth. And Leslie Squires, completely lost in the great city of New York in the first days after he had left the law school, accidentally met and was warmed by Hadley's smile when she came down to the city for a visit, and suddenly New York did not seem so foreign, it had taken on some of the childhood home security of Squires ; and so he suggested that she stay, and he asked her to marry him. And to a native of that upstate town, when a Squires suggested something it was done.

I don't even know whether they loved. There was a very beautiful baby. It was born in Toronto, because Toronto has the lowest infant mortality rate in all the world ; and it was brought to New York two weeks later in a special train, and it was installed in that Brooklyn apartment, in a nursery made out of two rooms with the walls between torn down and painted creamy white, and nurses were installed to watch desperately the baby ; while the rest of the apartment consisted of two rooms, the beds hardly ever made, and a dark, dusty kitchen with soiled dishes scattered. I don't know whether they loved. I never saw Hadley and Leslie in the nursery together. I sometimes came, and she was there and looked on while the baby was being bathed and weighed, and she smiled at it and at the nurses and at me with the same even white smile, and then she came closer and stopped smiling for a minute, and slightly pressed the little baby's nose with her index finger, so that when she removed the pressure the nose was white and bloodless for an instant. The baby looked at Hadley and then smiled at her, and she smiled back at it. The nurse said : "Time for beddy-bye." And I said : " I don't suppose Leslie will be home soon." " Well, I don't know," said Hadley. Or Hadley was at the Prospect Park Courts, or away in Manhattan working with a professional ; and there sat Leslie watching the baby playing in its pen. It slowly crawled up on its knees and tried to grasp the top bar of the pen with its little hand, and missed and lost its balance and fell down on its face ; was silent for a moment, deciding whether to scream or not, looked up at its father and saw him gravely wink, so it blinked up at him and smoothed its face and again tried to catch the elusive top of the pen.

I am very anxious to trace the pattern of Leslie's life at that time, because when the moment came for him to recapitulate, to summarize his life, I think this was the time he used for a criterion. Happiness is probably only a memory ; smoothing away the troubles and worries of our past life we remember the calm unruffled minutes of looking at a baby playing in its pen, and in our minds the memories of these minutes stretch into days. When the time came for Leslie to say : " What have I done with my life ? " he, I think, also said : " Remember those early days, and the baby growing, learning to walk, trying to repeat the daily sounds it heard ? I was happy then. And to-day I have befouled that happiness and made a mess of my life." And yet even

then he had lived no life. His days were, even at the best, even during the moments of hearing the baby gurgle, darkened by the feeling of guilt, by the realization that he had no place in life ; nothing in him was equal to the tremendous institution that had brought him forth, that he symbolized in such a pitiful way. Not only had the mountain given birth to a mouse, but this mouse realised that it was little and a puny creature that could by no gymnastic of the imagination justify its existence. There was the Squires plant ; it made huge machinery, it hired thousands of men, it paid these men as little as it could ; it was in conflict with them ; and once, even during the prosperous 'twenties, the management hired a labour agency to control in advance a possibly coming strike ; and for two days the newspapers printed the news of blood spilled at Squires. And what all for ? So that Leslie could be still unhappier. So that he could, walking the streets, cringe more, lift up his collar and hide away from people.

* * *

And now that I have to tell what happened when Leslie Squires found his heart's desire in the girl called Lolla, I realize that I have drawn no picture of him. I have described how he looked, slim, with dark, curly hair and stooping shoulders, so that the head looked down. I have told of the one distinguishing physical mark of his, the involuntary tic that convulsed his face ; I have said that he was very rich—but why he felt unworthy of this wealth of his I have not said, because I do not know. I could guess, for instance, that it was because the time was over when the country was growing, was ruthlessly being developed at the price of lies and theft and blood by human forces that were Leslie's ancestors. Whatever happened the forests had had to be cleared and the roads put through and the bridges built and the Squires Works created ; but now it was all done, all completed and ready to be used, to be enjoyed ; and perhaps as unconsciously as his Founder grandfather had robbed and maybe even killed and had felt justified because obstructions had been in the way, so Leslie was miserable, felt he should not live because he was an obstruction, an empty symbol no more necessary—that which he so inadequately represented needed no more representation, nor symbol. It had been built, was being used, had become part of life itself.

But that is only one explanation, and, even if true, Leslie himself were not aware of it—although he did keep his coat collar up, he did dread to be recognised as the many times millionaire, he did break out in cold sweat whenever another reporter, told by a persistent editor finally to get that crazy rich nut's story, knocked on the apartment door and through the chained opening argued and persisted ; he did refuse to use more than a minimum of the money that was flowing in such streams into the great accounts that bore his name. But he didn't know why ; if he had, he might have given up the estate and gone off a free man into the daily world ; or he might have rationalised his existence, supported charities,

set up research foundations, become what is known as a philanthropist, paying Paul with what his grandfather had taken away from Peter, and thus slept at night, and maybe even lost his tic. Because he did lose his tic while he was with Lolla.

* * *

She was a woman who, like Goya's Maya, looked outrageously naked when she was dressed ; and wore the sort of clothing that the Maya wore, things chiffon-like, lace-like, old and voluminous and not in style ; yet in some perverse way you never thought of what she wore, but of her flesh unclothed. She had a long nose and sharp teeth, and in the morning light she looked ugly, but when everything was right, the lights, the air, the mood, she seemed very beautiful. She had the trick of never looking at you when you spoke, but at your ear or just outside you, of never answering, of never seeming in the room with you, or completely aware of your existence. You felt she was a woman alone and self-sufficient, and you felt further that if you could penetrate this inside of hers and enter her attention and have her identify herself with you, something enchanting would then occur and you would be really happy.

Or rather that was how Leslie Squires felt because I thought that Lolla was a fake, and an obvious one besides. The dresses she wore had been too expensive once and now were too threadbare and too much out of style. She was too tired and too melancholy ; and that disturbing way she had of never looking at one prevented one in turn from looking at her attentively and learning whether her eyes were naturally lifted at the corners, or whether she was well made up. Since she hardly ever spoke, one couldn't learn what she thought, and I suspected that she thought of nothing at all. I felt she was a sort of lascivious-looking cow, stupid, without convictions or desires ; and the mask of lonely weariness she wore hid nothing behind it. Hadley at least had had a baby, played tennis, smiled nicely. Lolla sat in transparent clothing, oozing lust, and being completely unaware that the effect she had on the man looking at her was that of a rattler on a petrified jackrabbit. He sat, ready, willing to be gobbled up ; but she, like a snake too long in the sun, was taut from habit, and looked dangerous, but was much too inert to strike and to kill. I think actually, until she met Leslie, she had been one of the most respectable girls in all of New York, and that out of sheer laziness. I think she was companion to some very distant relative of Leslie's, or of some friend of Leslie's parents ; and I think he met her at a duty tea where, amid ancient people, ancient talk, and ancient silver service, he saw her, coiled in a field of weeds, smouldering and pouring tea.

And Leslie went mad and began, as the French say, to *exaggerate*. He called me up and took me to dinner at a great hotel, where through two kinds of still wine and then through sparkling wine he raved about this girl Lolla, trying to convince me that since men and women had gotten

off the trees and stood up straight there had never been such a girl as she ; and more, he tried, without me ever having seen her, to make me fall in love with the lyric picture he had drawn of her. He wanted me to want her, to want to meet her, left me at the table and at ten o'clock in the evening telephoned her in the quiet house she lived in and asked to be allowed to call, and got turned down and came back, eyes shining and a smooth and happy face, as much as to say : See, she is the kind of girl you can't call on at night.

But I had to meet her, and I did meet her, and I didn't like her. Of course she didn't look at me. She seemed unaware even of the enthusiastic Leslie, although actually it seemed to me she was not as unaware as she did appear. Perhaps my not liking her made me suspect her ; perhaps she really was a cow and not able to feel, to develop an attitude towards a person. I don't know. The whole pattern of what I know about Leslie's story is based in part on guesses. There is a beginning, a middle, the end appeared in all the newspapers of the world, but I saw Lolla perhaps three times and loathed her for what she was doing to Leslie, even if unconsciously, and I didn't analyse her. I judged her. I couldn't have predicted the gruesomeness of Lolla's end ; but I thought something terrible would happen. I looked at the usually miserable Leslie, and I saw him happy, happiness based not on inner peace, not on a suddenly accomplished adjustment to his life, an understanding, an acceptance and an order, but on a new chaos, so overpowering in its infatuation, so wild and for the moment so glamorous and whirling, that there was no everyday living in it, no getting up in the morning and going through the day in a normal manner ; but as a man who, drunk the night before, wakes up in a mist and drinks a glass of water and gets drunker still, and then drinks liquor, and so for days and days never sobers for a moment, so Leslie was drunk on Lolla, and wanted her when he was away from her and, seeing her, wanted her more.

His coat collar had come down, and in some ways he did become perhaps more fitted to the unnatural place that time had set him in. After the tragedy some Sunday supplement said that from the day he met the girl, until the moment when again alone he was taken to the police station of the Marine Division and asked : " Why did you do it ? " his face never once was moved by twitching, and only when he didn't answer, but when his eye suddenly and involuntarily winked, did a detective exclaim : " Why, that's that crazy Squires guy." So for a while he had lost his tic. And he did begin to spend money. The same Sunday supplement printed a photograph of the Squires' room at the Metropolitan Museum, and said that for a while at least Leslie revived the tradition the family had for loving art objects. But the itemised list of the valuables he presented to his newly-found love was printed alongside, and it sounds fantastic. For instance, told by some picture-forgery that the Maya in the Prado was not the genuine portrait, but

a copy, and that the original could be brought from its hidden place in Spain, he bought the painting for an astronomic sum ; he bought strange jewels that would fit Lolla's beauty ; he bought a house east of Central Park, and, while it was being altered, decorated, fitted, he bought—site unseen—a Catalan castle in the Pyrenees country and ordered it restored. He acted for a while like the Paris banker Nana ruined, although he had so much he could not possibly be ruined. I don't know whether the trustees of the Squires estate protested ; I don't suppose he ever again appeared in the gloomy offices where before he had sat so aimlessly and fidgeted. He became very busy, was always going somewhere, to examine something ; after the first two or three times when I saw him with the girl, he dropped me. Lolla, in one of the few moments of articulation in her life, must have remarked : " I don't like him," and that became that. I met him only once again, and then he didn't tell me any of his plans ; he probably wanted to, but something stopped him. I didn't suspect that the same night he was leaving America and taking Lolla for good and all to Europe. When on the following morning I saw the headlines in the paper I was astounded, and I was sure it could not be the same Leslie Squires that I knew. But it was.

* * *

The last day of Leslie Squires' freedom, who thought it was the beginning of his freedom, he called me and asked me to his house in Brooklyn. I had not seen Hadley nor the baby in perhaps two years. She was the same smiling athlete who—the maid having left because they could never keep a servant in that house—threw together some canned beef hash and some rice, pushed away what was on the dining-room table, and fed us ; and then we went to the nursery to see the beautiful baby that was now a lovely four-year-old child, and that in the place of nurses had a governess who was English and who wore a purple uniform. The child did not look at its father nor its mother ; it was just being put to bed, and it said : " Good night, Nanny," and it closed its eyes. I glanced at Hadley, who continued professionally smiling ; and I looked at Leslie and his eyes met mine, and I thought I almost saw the inside of the real Leslie Squires, something like his soul. He looked at me, and he wanted something, and I didn't know what it was he wanted.

Four hours later he and Lolla with their baggage got on board the ocean liner and locked themselves in their suite ; and an hour after that a passing steward heard screams coming from that suite and tried to break through the solid door, and couldn't ; called in the ship's firemen, and they smashed through and found in a bespattered room a woman lying on the floor almost cut up in pieces, and a man sitting in a soft chair, a razor in his hand.

The newspapers made a big circus of the case.

SOLVED

By LESLIE HALWARD

A MAN NAMED William Seymour was sitting on a bench under a big tree in a public park. Seymour was a little hump-backed man, about fifty with a pinched, yellow face and drooping eye-lids. He wore a dusty, dented bowler hat with a bit out of the brim, a black muffler, and patched and frayed jacket, waistcoat and trousers, each garment a different colour, part of a suit cast off by somebody a good deal taller and broader than himself. His boots might have been a policeman's, but no policeman had worn them for at least a couple of years. It was a dreadfully hot day, so Seymour was wisely sitting out of the sun, in the shade of the big tree, watching some youths playing cricket and wondering what was to become of him.

Seymour was unemployed. He had been unemployed so long that at times it seemed to him that he had never done any work. He had quite forgotten what it was like to occupy himself all day, from eight in the morning until half-past five or six at night, in a factory workshop. Once, about eighteen months ago, when he saw his brother-in-law, George, pull his pay envelope out of his pocket, he longed to pick it up, just to see what it was like to hold one in his hand again. He hadn't dared to ask his brother-in-law to let him do this. George would have called him an old fool.

There was no doubt about it, those youths could play cricket. They ought to be able to, though, when you came to think of it. Look at the practice they had. Every day, if it was fine, they'd be there, bowling, slogging, running, throwing, puffing and sweating, laughing and quarrelling. They were unemployed, too. They played cricket instead of wandering about the streets, standing on corners. Seymour had got to know several of them, through being in the park so often. They had got used to his sitting there, watching them. Sometimes they appealed to him, appointing him temporary umpire. But he never gave a decision. He always said he hadn't seen what took place. They called him Wheezer because of his cough.

Seymour felt sorry for these youths ; but not as sorry as he felt for himself. They were out of work, certainly ; some of them had been on the dole since they left school ; but they all had somewhere to go, knew that there'd be a bit of grub for them when they got in, somewhere to sleep. He had nowhere to go, didn't know where his next bit of grub was coming from, hadn't even thought about where he was going to sleep. That morning his wife had turned him out of the house.

There was young Blue Shirt coming in to bat. By God, he could lam 'em, if you like ! No half-measures about him. Hit or miss, that was his motto. If he missed, there was always the chance that the bowler wasn't on the mark ; if he hit, it counted. He lifted his bat at the same

time as the ball left the bowler's hand. *Bonk!* Away sped one of the others after the ball. Blue Shirt got a comfortable three out of that.

Well, what was he going to do? Seymour asked himself. He rubbed one ankle with the other heel. He wished his wife would drop down dead in the street. It gave him a morsel of pleasure to have a fleeting glimpse of her falling backwards and hitting her head on the hard pavement. But he was imagining things. She wouldn't drop down dead. Not her. She'd go on living *and* doing all right for herself till she was a bloody hundred.

"Owzat?"

Seymour looked up.

"Owzat, Wheezer?"

"I never seen nothin'," said Seymour. "I wasn't alookin'. I was athinkin'."

"It was leg afore," said Ginger. "It was leg afore, I tell yer!"

"Gerraway with yer!" said Blue Shirt. "Leg afore me ——!"

Seymour looked down again, studied the scorched grass at his feet, not listening, thinking. Well, what was he going to *do*? he asked himself. Where could he go? If he had some money he could go to his sister's in Burnley. But he hadn't got any money. He couldn't go anywhere without money. He wished to Christ his wife would fall in the copper while she was stirring the clothes. He saw her face, like red jelly. But he was imagining things. She wouldn't fall in the copper. Not her. She wouldn't fall anywhere.

Blue Shirt was still batting. *Bonk!* Another couple. He must be piling 'em up.

Well, what *was* he going to do? Seymour asked himself. He couldn't go to his sister's in Burnley because he hadn't got any money. None of the others would have him. He knew that without asking. He wished his wife would choke her bloody self while she was drinking a cup of tea. He saw her eyes sticking out, heard her gurgling. But he was imagining things. She wouldn't choke herself. Not her. He wished . . . But what was the good of wishing? If wishing did anything she'd have been dead and gone years ago and he'd be a rich man by now.

Blue Shirt opened his shoulders and hit out with all his might. *Bonk!* The ball came straight for Seymour.

"Hey up! Look out!" the youths all shouted.

"Where can I go? What's to become of me?" Seymour asked himself. The ball hit him smack on the right temple. "Oh," said Seymour, and fell off the bench on to the scorched grass.

All the youths ran up and looked at his still body.

"They can't do nothin'," said Blue Shirt. "It was an accident. They can't hurt us."

"Us? You mean *you*!"

Nevertheless, they were all frightened.

Seymour wasn't frightened. He wasn't anything. Certainly he

TELL ME WHAT I WAS DOING

By JAMES FEIBLEMAN

JOEY PICKED UP a block, a large one with sharp corners. It looked like hard wood, but was only rubber painted to imitate wood so it could not hurt anybody. There were letters written all over it, and pictures of familiar things—Joey liked the mechanical things better than the animals, and the airplane best of all—a block among other blocks, yet he had singled it out. He squared his feet and glanced about aimlessly, the block in his upraised hand. A fresh decision to be met and his to meet; for he alone was free to single out an action here and now, and to cut off all else save its fulfilment. He was beginning to feel himself; he shrugged his shoulders. He swung on his hips, stiff from waist to head, ready to hurl the block.

"Don't throw that, Joey," Jenny said.

Made aware of the presence of his nurse, he paused, with every bit of the cautious defiance that was possible to one of three years in the world. His sturdy little figure still abrogated all ideas, and his black shoe-button eyes were keen by virtue of a wisdom that was as yet without character of its own. Only his movements were actual, particular.

"And if I throw it?" he asked, slowly beginning to sway on his hips again.

Jenny put aside her book and pushed her glasses up over her hair as she rose. She stood there, her fists at her middle. "You'll hurt somebody or break something, just like you did last time, and I'll have to call your mother to you."

"What will mother do to me?" He said "moth-er" with the tip of his tongue between his lips.

"Don't you throw it," Jenny warned.

"What will mother do to me?"

"She'll most likely put you in a corner, or spank your seat, or send you straight to bed without any supper but your bread and milk, that's what she'll do."

They stood, legs apart, squared off, facing each other. Joey smiled the quick, ingratiating smile of young children, which arose of itself from the thin near surface crust of memory, and went away again for no reason, leaving the face expressionless and set.

"Just don't you throw it, that's all."

There was silence. Joey hesitated, a split fraction of a second longer.

"Then may I drop it over my head?" he inquired, his head cocked on one side.

"Yes, on condition you don't throw it," Jenny said, sitting down again. Although relaxed, she kept her glasses raised for action.

Joey put his arm up back of his head and bent his torso parallel with

the floor. Then he threw the block down along the line of his back. It skated on his spine, and, bouncing to the table, collided with a cigarette-box which was knocked to the floor. The box flew open and its contents were scattered about.

Jenny stood again, ready. Joey gave her a quick, untroubled stare. He picked up and broke a cigarette and then looked at Jenny.

"Now just for that I'm going to call your mother to you," Jenny said. She marched officially out of the room and closed the door behind her.

Joey stayed where he was, motionless, seeing nothing, really not focusing attention on anything, holding his arms straight out from his body as though they were in some sort of stretch. The room continued to enclose him and the sun to bring in silence for what seemed a decade, until Mrs. Helke came in. Jenny closed the door.

"Jenny tells me you have been a very bad boy," Mrs. Helke said.

Joey said nothing, but tasted his thumb and kept his own silence. The sun continued to pour the close afternoon of a warm and sultry day into the room.

"Take your thumb out of your mouth this minute, do you hear me?" his mother said. Slowly the thumb was removed, wet and glistening. "Jenny tells me you have been a bad boy, throwing a block after she told you not to. Sometimes I think you wait deliberately until you are told not to do something to do it. Sometimes I think you'll grow up to be a disgrace."

Joey looked from his mother to Jenny and back again. He put his thumb slowly back into his mouth.

"Didn't I tell you to keep that thumb out?" mother asked. The thumb was removed again.

"Next time Jenny has to come for me, you'll be well and properly punished. Being a bad boy at your age! You listen to Jenny!"

The thumb was back. But for a moment neither Joey nor his mother was conscious of the fact. When Mrs. Helke realized it, she gave one little slap and knocked the wrist down and the wet thumb with it. For a moment Joey just opened his eyes wider, too surprised to feel anything. Then, without warning, he burst into the most furious fit of yells and crying. He cried and cried, as if in some ecstatic state of hopelessness and abandon.

Mrs. Helke was disgusted with the inevitability of Joey's bad habits, and with her own plainness and powerlessness to meet and combat them. Under the circumstances she could only jeer. "Joey," she said, "you're an awful cry-baby. Cry-baby, cry-baby."

"Stop that, Joey. You know you don't have to cry like that," Jenny said from near the door.

Both women waited, fists on hips, contemplating action. Now there were sounds of feet on the steps. Joey listened and the women listened.

Professor Helke entered. He seemed very tired, and sat down in the nearest chair, expressionless, exhausted.

"Well, what's going on here?" he asked somewhat rhetorically over his rimless glasses. "I hear something I shouldn't hear, something I think I should never, never hear. A brave little man, my son, crying. I'm ashamed, yes I am."

"Good evening, Professor Helke," Jenny said.

"Hello, dear!" Professor Helke greeted his wife. "What's the cause of all this?" he asked genially. "Our little man crying?"

The question inspired fresh floods, and Joey wailed as if there were nothing for anyone in the world but sorrow and nothing for himself but tears.

Mrs. Helke told him all about it.

"I'll see what I can do," he said. He knelt down in front of Joey heavily, on both knees. "Don't do that, Joey," he began, "it doesn't do any of us any good, not even you. You see, you have no good cause to weep. That makes us all uncomfortable. And, furthermore, if you do not learn to control yourself and use reason more, you may grow up unruly and disorderly, and be an evil man. And that makes us unhappy."

Joey continued to cry. The Professor sat back on his heels.

"I'm sure," he continued, "you want your Jenny to think well of you. Well, she won't unless you learn soon to control yourself. Don't you understand?"

"I can't stand it any longer. I'm going to my room," Mrs. Helke said. "It simply breaks my heart; I can't stand one minute more."

"I'll go with you," the Professor said. He had come home already weary, and now he was discouraged as well.

Silence, only a heavy silence, broken by the sobbing. Joey opened his eyes and looked out of them for his audience. He hunted all around without moving his feet, but there was only patient Jenny sitting in the corner with her knitting. Gradually for want of the proper appreciation, the tears began to slacken. They were coming like waves, and lost first in intensity and then in frequency. Then they subsided into sobs, asthmatic and breath-taking. Finally, they slowed up to the point where Joey himself was willing to intercept them with words.

"Wipe my tears, Jenny," he said.

"Please," Jenny said.

"Please."

"Please what?"

"Please, wipe my tears."

"Then come over here to me."

Joey careered across the room, blinded by his weeping, which he was not yet able to make stop. Jenny put her knitting down, and, taking Joey on to her lap, sopped up the tears from the corners of his eyes with

her handkerchief. Jenny smiled at him a little ; feebly he smiled back and hugged her.

" See me, Jenny," Joey said.

" I see you," Jenny said, smiling. " Only you mustn't cry like that ever again. You're getting to be too big a boy."

" I'm not a big boy, I'm a baby," Joey said.

" You're a big, big boy," Jenny said.

" No, I'm a baby."

Mrs. Helke and the Professor tiptoed softly back into the room. " Has he stopped ? " Mrs. Helke asked in a whisper.

Jenny nodded to them. " No, you're a big boy."

They smiled ; they were very pleased.

" A big boy ! " they said.

" A baby," Joey said.

" A big boy ! "

" No," Joey said laughing—they were all laughing. " Billy Friend is a big boy."

" Yes, Joey, he is, indeed," Mrs. Helke said.

" But, mother, Billy Haas is a big boy, too."

" Yes, he is also. And some day—"

" Mother, then are all big boys Billy ? "

" Now that was really smart, Franz," Mrs. Helke said, turning to her husband.

" His first induction," Professor Helke observed. " His first simple induction. It probably means that from now on he will think in words; it means he will pick up words faster from now on. Very interesting. I must remember to watch him closely."

" What ? "

" I said what he just said about the boys was his first spoken induction ; at least, I haven't heard any others, have you ? "

" What nonsense," Mrs. Helke said, " at his age. It's just smart, that's all it is."

" Isn't that all I was saying ? That he was extremely intelligent for his years ? Employing such verbal induction ? "

" It may be what you said, but it's not what I said. I said he was smart for his age, that's all. He's not a wonder child," Mrs. Helke said.

" Well, isn't that exactly what I said—what you said, only in different words ? " the Professor asked.

" Oh, never mind," Mrs. Helke said shortly.

" All right. Oh, very well."

" I'm going now ; I think it's time to dress for dinner," Mrs. Helke said.

" I, too," the Professor said.

They kissed Joey, each in turn. After they had gone out, Joey went over of his own accord to kiss Jenny.

"A sweet boy," Jenny said.

The Helkes, in their bedroom, had begun undressing. For a while they said nothing.

Then the Professor said: "We must not do that. Life is too short, and you know as well as I do we really love each other very much."

"We do, don't we, Franz?" Mrs. Helke turned to him.

"I think we do."

"Then let's not let ourselves get into foolish quarrels any more."

"No, that's right; quarrels are cheap."

"Not any quarrels at all. Not about Joey or your work or my lack of understanding or want of interest in your work or about where to go in the evenings or what to do or anything at all."

"No."

"Not even a little quarrel, never."

"Never," Professor Helke said. "I'll keep my work on logic to myself and not bore you with it. For I know it is a bore to those who don't know anything about it, for those who don't care and who have no special interest in it. I can tell that myself sometimes when I watch the faces of my students in the classroom. That's the time I am forced to pause for wonder: it's not very flattering to me, I can assure you, to contemplate those faces."

Mrs. Helke walked up to her husband and put her hands on his shoulders. "But I do take an interest in your work, a very great interest. You'll never realize how often and how hard I try to understand the deep things you spend all your thoughts on. Only I am not as intelligent as you; only, once in a while, I think, you ought to let yourself forget your work a little, like when you are in the nursery with Joey; you ought to think about him then and not about him in connection with your work or about your work."

"I do, I do think about Joey."

Mrs. Helke smiled to herself. "That's right, do," she said. "You should, you really should."

Joey stuck his head in the door, and then followed it in. He had pyjamas on that dragged the floor because the pants were slipping, and a morning-gown that dragged because it was too long.

"Why, look who's here. Look who has come to visit us," the Professor said.

"Joey, Joey," Mrs. Helke said. She was back fixing her hair at the dressing-table.

"He's all right in there?" Jenny called in from the hall.

"Yes, Jenny, leave him. Come and get him at supper-time."

"His supper won't be up for a good ten minutes yet. I'll come after him," Jenny said.

"Come here, little man, your pants are falling. Let me pull them up," the Professor said.

Mrs. Helke smiled through the mirror. Joey went over to the table to watch his mother groom. He touched the powder-box.

"What's this?"

"A powder-box; and don't touch it."

"And this?"

"A comb; and don't touch that, either."

"And this?"

"A bottle of perfume. Don't touch anything on this table." She leaned over and gave him a quick hug. "I've got to dress now, and I don't want you to touch anything you're told not to, but you're a sweet thing. Isn't he, Franz?"

"He is that."

"Yes, he is indeed."

Joey, driven from the table, and in despair of finding anything of tangible interest, began to run around it in concentric circles. After a few revolutions he became dizzy, so that he fell and bumped his head. Professor Helke, who had been trying to put on his shirt and watch Joey at the same time, came to the rescue. He picked Joey up. Joey stood up and looked around, waiting for a sign of how his fall might be received. If his father and mother laughed, it would be a great joke, and he would be obliged to laugh, too, perhaps even to try to fall on his head again. If they were silent and looked sorry for him because he had hurt himself, then it was a bad thing, a very bad thing, and he would be obliged to cry his heart out over a bumped head, perhaps even to try to fall on his head again. So he looked carefully now, on a tension, awaiting a sign.

"Quick, Franz, laugh," Mrs. Helke said. She laughed and the Professor laughed.

Joey laughed when he heard his cue, but feebly, for this time the fall had really hurt him.

Professor Helke went back to struggling with his shirt, and Mrs. Helke to fluffing her long, thin hair with a wide comb. She was still somewhat pretty, and still in the presence of her husband persisted in affecting girlish ways; but her girlish ways were those of a past decade and actually revealed her age more than a smart middle-aged air might have.

Joey tried a new method of walking, by keeping all his weight longer than necessary on one foot at a time. In order to maintain his balance, he was compelled to lean far out over the foot that was carrying the weight. It was almost supper-time now, and supper always was the last thing before bed. He was tired, and very nearly at the end of his resources. He had exhausted every possible means of amusing himself. Still balancing, he walked quite accidentally into the Professor's patent leather evening-shoes.

"Don't do that, Joey," the Professor said, a bit impatiently. "You'll crack my shoes and spoil them."

Joey was pleased for the moment ; he had found something to stay weariness and boredom. He stood on the toes of the shoes and jumped up and down. The Professor watched Joey for a minute, saying nothing. Then he walked slowly over to the child and sat on his heels in front of him. Joey stopped jumping and regarded his father.

"Joey, I told you not to do that, didn't I ?"

There was no answer.

"I warned you not to step on my shoes, and instead of that you jumped on them. I gave you fair warning, didn't I ? And you deliberately disobeyed me."

There was no sign of an answer.

"Franz, what are you going to do ?" Mrs. Helke asked.

"Punish him mildly, that's all, for his deliberate disobedience."

Professor Helke said : "Hold out your hand."

Reluctantly Joey held out his left hand, palm upward. The Professor slapped it several times. Joey's jaw fell and his eyes opened with surprise. He looked at his father reproachfully. His breath came short and fast and quickly shorter and faster. Then suddenly he burst into tears, a torrential flood of tears and wailing, as though he were unloved and homeless and alone in the centre of the world.

"Now you've done it," Mrs. Helke said.

"Well, he had to be punished. And besides, he's got no business crying like that. He's getting to be much too big." Professor Helke rose to his feet and walked a little away.

"You mean you can't stand to hear him crying, that's what you mean. You want to discipline him, and afterwards you leave the work to me. Somehow you always bring the whole thing on, and when he begins crying you're always the one who can't stand it. You're always the one, and it's a pity you never think of that first." Mrs. Helke kneeled and held Joey's head against her breasts.

"You want I should come get him, maybe ?" Jenny asked through the door.

"Yes, by all means come in and get him. He's utterly uncontrollable when he's like that," the Professor said.

"If he is, it's all your own fault. Here he is, Jenny, take him. It's supper-time, thank God. Bathe him and give him his supper and put him to bed. Time—it's time he sleeps and rests."

Joey's eyes were almost fast asleep, but he was still crying when Jenny carried him off into the nursery.

"Jenny doesn't like you to cry like that," Jenny said to him softly, almost in a whisper.

Joey only cried the harder ; he cried to Jenny. Then without warning the crying subsided as usual into a series of sobs.

"See me, Jenny," Joey pleaded between the sobs.

"I see you."

"I want you to see me."

"I see you, but you've been a bad boy to-day, all right."

"See me."

"Throwing that block when I told you not to, and yelling and crying and making a scene like that, and spoiling all your previous good behaviour."

"See me, see me."

In the Helkes' bedroom, meanwhile, Mrs. Helke was sitting on the edge of the bed, and the Professor was sitting beside her holding her hand in both of his, his shirt still incompletely buttoned. Both were looking to the side, thoroughly downcast.

"I don't know," the Professor was saying, "I don't grasp what I do wrong. I just don't seem able to put things together in their ordinary settings, never able to fit them all in. It's a little vague in my mind, I must confess—how I always manage to do the wrong thing. There are principles—after all, one must have some in order to live—and there are occasions in actual life; practical problems which must be met immediately and without hesitation or foresight. The question I never am able to settle properly is, how to associate acts and ideas together as suddenly as they should be associated, and in their proper relations. It does not seem as though one could live and not know how to live, think constantly yet make no original contributions to thought. But I, for one, must do exactly this. Sometimes I think I have grasped the answer; sometimes I suspect it; only to find that in the end it always manages to elude—that it is for ever just a little beyond me."

A halt had come into the Professor's voice. Mrs. Helke was crying silently, too. She held on very tightly to her husband's hand. She had not been listening any too well to what he had been saying, but she heard him stop.

"It's all so confused," she began. "All so terribly confusing. We're so different from each other, each so hard to understand. You, Franz, with your fine, logical, brilliant, not understanding mind; Joey with his young but strong baby will, and already ungovernable temper, shouting always to be heard; and I, so awfully confused always, none of us understanding, not one of us actually in touch with the other. I think we really must all be going mad."

Suddenly the door flew open and crashed against the wall, and Joey rushed in again, naked and refreshed and wide awake from his bath. He had run away from Jenny a second time, and was all smiles now and sympathy, as though he had not cried at all that day, almost as though there were no such things as tears and unhappiness and crying. He glanced from his mother to his father and back again, asking for friendship and love, ready to return smile for smile, laugh for laugh, mightily pleased with his own naughtiness in having run away from Jenny.

But neither of his parents could play with him now. They saw him

and did not see him ; they saw right through him. Joey himself began to sense that something was wrong.

"Tell me what I was doing," he said. "Tell me."

"I think we must be out and out mad to talk and act this way," Mrs. Helke said to the Professor, "and with all our efforts, unable to better understand each other. Stark mad ! Stark, raving mad !" She rose, stiff as a corpse.

The Professor said nothing. He did not move, did not take his eyes off the floor. Slowly, his fingers went to his shirt ; automatically they began to fasten the buttons in their buttonholes.

"Tell me," Joey kept repeating, reaching his hands to his parents' knees, holding his smile in readiness if his parents should slowly come back to him, see him, and know him to be there. "Tell me, tell me, tell me ! Tell me what I was doing !"

DEATH AT LUMBA'S BEND

By DELFIN FRESNOSA

FIVE MEN WERE killed early this morning by a prematurely-exploded blast. Words flew fast in the village, and before long there was a crowd gathered near the scene of the accident. However, not one of them could come very near because the rocks and earth on the mountain side still rolled now and then.

We who were working in the mines did not yet know that there had been an accident. We only came to know of it when we were having our mess. Possibly it was either Demetrio's gang or Pito's gang that had perished, but as yet we could not be certain. After the mess we fell to work again, but many of those who were personally acquainted with men of Demetrio's and Pito's gangs could not work very well. I myself was a great friend of Demetrio, and I could not keep my thoughts away from him. When my shift came, I crawled out of the hold and found that several of my friends had already volunteered to dig out the bodies.

As soon as we entered the village, we were met by a number of excited women and children. They told us that only one of Demetrio's men had escaped death, and even he was in a very serious condition. He had been taken to the hospital. . . . So it was really true that Demetrio had died.

We passed by the hut where we boarded, and I felt a pang. I could only stare vacantly at the old woman, who was looking out of the window. She was our occasional washerwoman, and now she had brought a clean suit to the hut so that by the time Demetrio's body was found we could easily change his clothes. My companions saw her also, but not one of us broke the silence. Instead, we hurried to the shop where the company kept its tools, and asked for implements.

There were already a number of men excavating on the mountain side, and they were working with furious haste. But as there was still a gigantic heap of rocks and earth and crushed trees, we wondered if we could find all the bodies before nightfall. A straggling group of onlookers fringed the place where we were to dig. There was now no great danger of the rocks sliding down on us, for the earth seemed settled and secure.

The sun flooded the countryside with relentless heat, and every once in a while we were compelled to rest, even though we wanted to work ceaselessly. The big trunks of trees we had uncovered and hacked thundered down the gully, followed by a screaming avalanche of earth and boulders.

There were eight men who pushed the only cart we could procure. We would shovel the earth into the cart, and the men would push it and

empty it some distance away. But no matter how hard we worked, it seemed to us that we only scraped off very little of the heap.

In the distance, a little obscured by the tops of trees, we could see the huts in the village. The place looked very peaceful and attractive, but my imagination would wander, and I would think of the little hut I shared with Demetrio and three others. And I would hastily glance away. I could but imperfectly see the dark entrance of the mine, and now and then a car loaded with earth would emerge and rattle away. Then it would come back empty and disappear into the dark hole where sweating men would fill it again.

Suddenly there was a hubbub among the curious onlookers, and we glanced up to see what was the matter. A woman was coming up the improvised trail, and she seemed to be running beyond her strength, for she swayed as if she were drunk. When she were near enough to be recognizable, someone said that she must be Pepe's woman. She must have just learned of the accident and run away from town to come here. She and Pepe were married a year and a half ago, and for the past two months she had been in town during her confinement. Undoubtedly she had left her child in town and run away from her parents, with whom she was staying.

Perhaps if we had been given the chance to slink away without her seeing us, many of us would have done so. We felt extremely embarrassed, as if we were to blame for her husband's death ; and uneasy, for there was no guessing what she would do. Perhaps she would go right off her mind on the spot.

She came blundering to the slope of the tangled mass of earth and boulders, and she was panting and sobbing. At first, she seemed not to know what to do, for she just stood there precariously, trembling and wildly staring around. She was very pale and her eyes had the vacancy of an idiot's look. Her dress had been ripped in places, and her hair hung in disorder. For a time, she seemed to communicate the same enervation to us, and we stood silent and watchful, as if waiting for her first move.

Her sobs were growing weaker and weaker. Finally, they were only like distracted sighs. But after her eyes came to rest on us, standing there silently watching her, she broke into a loud fit of weeping. She suddenly knelt down on the ground, covered her face with her hands, and cried louder. Some of the men approached her and tried to calm her, but when comforting hands were laid on her shoulders, she flung them away and shouted that she be left alone.

For a time we did not know what to do with her. Later on, however, her parents came and cajoled her into going back to town. She walked between her parents, crying like a child.

By nightfall we had found only two bodies. One was that of Busio. The other was so considerably disfigured that it was not recognizable as

yet. We put the bodies on makeshift stretchers and carried them to the village.

A representative from the company met us in the village and took care of the bodies. With him was an embalmer from the funeral parlour in town who began to embalm the bodies so that they would last until the company received word from the families of the dead men as to what was to be done with the bodies. A car from the "funeraria" came to the village and carried the dead to town.

It is the policy of the company to indemnify the family of a worker who meets with an accident while working for the company. The company pays thirty pesos to the family that is willing to let the company bury the dead. But if the family wants to have the body, the company shoulders the transportation of the remains to the family, but does not feel obliged to pay any more money. Usually, however, it sends five or ten pesos as a sort of consolation to the bereaved family.

We watched the car speed away, and when we could not see it any more, we talked about the accident. I moved from one group to another, unable to make up my mind to go home. And even though they talked mostly about the accident, and I was beginning to think that I could not stand it any longer, yet I could not go anywhere else, for I did not want to be alone and be left to my own thoughts. Perhaps it was just my imagination, but I seemed to sense that the atmosphere in the village had become ominous and subtly suggestive of death. The village was unusually quiet, as if these workers who laboured in constant danger had been brought too close to the reality of their danger. The women were also strangely subdued. I hastened away from them and went to the hut where I boarded.

I thought I could sleep easily after such a fatiguing day, but I was mistaken. After I had put out the light, the darkness oppressed me and I seemed to hear the breathing of Demetrio beside me. I hastily relighted the kerosene lamp, but even the light could not dispel my nervousness, so I slipped down from the house and went to an open-all-night restaurant. There were many people there, and they talked loudly.

I was glad when at last the faint glimmer of dawn broke on the horizon. Outside the restaurant, the streets were already thronged with men going to the mines. The men who had been in the establishment also came out, some going home to sleep, and others going to work. I ate my breakfast, and when I went out I fell in with a bunch that was going to dig out the dead.

By the middle of the afternoon we had extracted the last body. This, with the two others we had previously found, were placed in the waiting car sent by the "funeraria" and taken to town. I had seen Demetrio's body taken from under a huge boulder, and in some parts it looked as if it had been ground to a pulp. Even before the stone had crushed him, he had already been killed by the blast. One of his arms had been torn

away, and his face had been so mutilated that instead of a face, he had a blackened, raw mass of flesh. The sight of him greatly unnerved me, and some of the men who dug with us turned away.

Pepe, who had been at a distance from the others of Demetrio's men when the accident occurred, was not so horribly mangled, but he was as limp as if all the bones in his body had melted. . . . After the car had left, we slowly wended our way back to the village and returned the implements we had borrowed.

In answer to the telegrams sent out by the company after the accident, two of the families replied that they would let the company bury their dead. One of the men who died did not have any family, and nobody seemed to know where he came from, either. Demetrio's wife replied that she would have his body, and Pepe's remains were taken by his wife. And so the company buried three of the dead, and after we left the cemetery we were treated to several glasses of beer.

Demetrio's body remained in the chapel of the "funeraria" waiting for the boat that docked once a week in town. Sometimes a bunch of miners would drop in and stay for a while, then others would come in after them. For the first two days and nights, it was easy to keep vigil over his dead body. Some miners brought guitars with them and others sang and the nights passed quite easily. But when I went there, I saw that the lid of the coffin had been shut, unlike the others in the chapel where one could see the bodies of the dead. Perhaps the corpse that lay inside that coffin was terrible to look at even though it had been dressed.

On Sunday morning the boat docked in port. We had not surmised that Demetrio's wife would turn up for the body herself, but she came with her son. Demetrio had often told us of the wife he left and his three children, and through him we had come to have intimate glimpses of his family life. He never failed to send in his earnings to his wife, and sometimes she sent him home-made delicacies, which he pressed us to share with him. Now this must be his eldest son who was now in the Sixth Grade, and I seemed to hear Demetrio's chuckle when he reeled off the doings of his son in school. He did not boast, though: he was a simple man and must have thought that we would also enjoy what he liked. And, indeed, we were glad to hear his simple stories of life on the farm which he had left—temporarily, as he was wont to say.

The three of us who had boarded with Demetrio attended to his widow. She was strangely calm, as if she had already spent her sorrow before she came here. Her son followed her all the while, hollow-eyed, and as if ready at any moment to burst out crying.

Late in the afternoon we went with her to the wharf, for the boat was sailing that same day. We stood in the shadow of the ship which was loading. A few feet farther away from us was a black coffin, and our eyes strayed uneasily towards it. We could not find a suitable topic for

conversation, so that our talk was abrupt and vague. Then a crane was lowered and a man on deck shouted down to us to prepare the coffin. Then the crane came down and shortly it went up again. The black coffin dangled uncertainly before it slowly disappeared into the hold of the ship. I looked at the widow, and saw her dab her eyes with a handkerchief.

A nondescript crowd was watching the loading of the ship. Some of those composing it were from our mining village, and formed in straggling groups, talking and smiling. As I watched them, I felt a great desire to be with them,—or better, that the boat should weigh anchor immediately, for I was becoming restless in the widow's presence. I saw that my companions were restless, too. The silence among us was becoming constrained : we had nothing to talk about, and the ship had still about a quarter of an hour to go.

Then I saw Vidal making a way for himself in the crowd. He waved to me, and when he was free of the crowd, he approached us. He was plainly embarrassed and seemed to want to say something, but he could not utter a thing. He looked rather comical. He is a big man, and I have known him to do the task of two men, but now he looked like a guilty little boy. Suddenly he pulled out a roll of bills from his pocket and offered it to the widow, saying that he had collected it from his friends. The calm of her demeanour suddenly fell from her, and she would have fallen to her knees and kissed his hand had he not stayed her. She began to cry and utter her thanks.

She waved good-bye to us, and we waved back to her. We watched the boat dwindle into a mere dot in the distance. The crowd began to disperse, and five of us, as if of one mind, went into a bar. By midnight we were sufficiently drunk, and we went from one cabaret to another until dawn.

UNCLE ARTHUR

A Moral Fantasy for Organ and Four Voices.¹

By JOHN PUDNEY

(Portion of a radio script from the story, "The Albions' Secret," printed in "Life and Letters To-day," Spring, 1937.)

PRINCIPAL VOICES

LILY. . . . a lonely little girl.
 MRS. ALBION . . . her mother.
 MR. ALBION . . . an upright man.
 AN ELEPHANT.

Other Voices

MRS. BRIDIE, MISS CARVER, MRS. BAKER, VICAR, GARAGE MAN, YOUNG STARK.

Music by Jack Clarke. Played by Reginald Foort at the B.B.C. Theatre Organ.

Note.—It is intended to convey all sounds, effects, and incidental music by means of a score written for cinema organ.

A few obvious effects can be 'spot'.

(*Lily's thinking theme. Unhappily.*)

LILY. I am Lily Albion. Little Lily. I am a good little thing. I don't mix very much with the Bridie children, next door, nor with the Starks, opposite. Sometimes the Miss Carvers, from down the avenue, are kind to me and I am polite back. Mother says that is the way to behave. Yes, I am alone rather a lot. It is the difficulty, mother says, of living in a district which is going down.

But something will happen one day. Something will happen one of these wet afternoons, as sure as my name's Little Lily.

(*Mrs. Albion's theme. Unhappily.*)

MRS. ALBION. I don't know where we should be if I were not practical—like the Starks, I suppose, hard-up and shameless about it. I've been a good wife to George Albion: and, let me say that it's not always been easy. It is so much easier to keep up appearances, you see, if you are in a district where you can keep yourself to yourself. In that respect, of course, I should say that the Avenue has gone down. Why, when we came to "The Croft" twelve years ago, *everybody* caught the 8.57 in the mornings. And now, why the Starks are lounging about here at all hours: and Mr. Bridie—in work one day and out the next—I often wonder how they manage at all, and

¹ Broadcast by the B.B.C. in Empire and National Programmes, 11.30—12 midnight, 13/14th April, 1937.

why they chose our Avenue in any case. For, say what you like, this is not South Street. Now that we have our little car—yes, we shall have had it two years come Whitsun—we have found it a good deal easier. It gives one what George calls a “certain status”. But what pleases me is that one can keep oneself to oneself now. One need not rely on the neighbours for anything.

(*Same.*)

Oh, dear! I hope George didn't mean it when he said we might have to give up the car. What should we look like!

(*Same.*)

Bah! Yes. Another instalment on the radiogram on Thursday. That's to-morrow. We can't possibly be without it, now the Bridies have had theirs. Ours is so much better than theirs. But I don't know where the money's coming from: I don't really.

(*Segue Lily's theme.*)

LILY. One day something will happen. Even if everybody else is afraid I shall not be afraid.

(*Segue Mrs. Albion's theme.*)

MRS. ALBION. Two purl, one plain. Two purl, one plain. Lucky I managed to get that bit of stuff so cheap. It will give me just that something at the Church Bazaar. Two purl, one plain. Two purl, one plain. It's tiresome the way Lily always wants to play with all these local children. It makes us look as if we are almost *anxious* to mix. Two purl, one plain. Two purl.

(*Mrs. A. theme cut.*)

LILY. Oh Mother, Mother! Look at the elephant coming down the front garden.

(*Elephant theme.*)

MRS. ALBION. Tiresome child! Best disregard her when she talks like this. Two purl, one plain. Two purl . . .

(*Develop theme.*)

LILY. I always thought something would come. An elephant! Aren't I lucky? I must be the first to the front door.

(*Door.*)

(*Bring theme to piano finish. Emphasis on approach of footsteps.*)

ELEPHANT. I'm your Uncle Arthur.

LILY (*Gasp—then*). Oh, Mother, Mother! The elephant that has come says that he is Uncle Arthur. How rude of Mother. Just a moment please. (*Calling.*) He says he's Uncle Arthur.

MRS. ALBION. Who does?

LILY. Sh, sh! The elephant.

MRS. ALBION. What elephant, Lily?

LILY. The elephant I told you about, who has just called.

MRS. ALBION. Lily, don't stand there at the door. Come right in.

(*Lily comes in.*) Now tell me, who is at the door?

LILY. Uncle Arthur.

MRS. ALBION. Uncle Arthur! I've never heard such nonsense. I'll go to the door myself. And mind you, if you're playing the fool, there'll be trouble. Out of the way, now.

(*Pause. Bring up Elephant motif.*)

HELP! HELP! We shall be trampled underfoot. It must be a zoo escaped. Lily, you bad girl, why didn't you say?

LILY. Oh, Mother, he's terribly stuck. What can we do for him?

MRS. ALBION. Come away, Lily. Run round to the Bridies and get them to telephone. Call the police, call its keeper. Quick now. I'll be after you. What a horrid great ugly brute . . .

LILY. But Mother, he says . . .

MRS. ALBION. Don't dare to open your mouth, Lily, wicked girl. It's a disgrace, that's what it is; an outrage.

LILY. And he's stuck more in than out, poor . . .

MRS. ALBION. Be quiet, Lily. We must not lose our heads, or we shall be trodden to death. That it should have visited us! This filthy great ANIMAL!

ELEPHANT. I'm your Uncle Arthur.

MRS. ALBION. Oh! Er, um.

ELEPHANT. I'm your Uncle Arthur.

(*Mrs. A.'s theme, jerkily.*)

MRS. ALBION. I don't believe it. Lily is an imaginative child, always thinking she can hear things. But I—that's different.

(*Cut theme.*)

Will you repeat that please?

LILY. He's said it twice, Mother: and he must be terribly uncomfortable . . .

MRS. ALBION. Quiet, Lily! I wish him to repeat that remark.

ELEPHANT. I'm your Uncle Arthur.

LILY (*joyously clapping her hands*). I'm Lily, little Lily.

MRS. ALBION. But this is absurd. What will the neighbours think? Stop dancing, Lily. Go out and play quietly in the back garden. Give me a chance to think this out, for heaven's sake. If the Bridie kids are nosey, you can just ignore them. Off you go now.

LILY (*distant*). Good-bye, Uncle Arthur. Good-bye . . .

(*Lily's theme, suggesting her tripping along, saying to herself . . .*)

I do think Mother's being cruel to Uncle Arthur. The least she could have done would have been to offer him a bun. One thing is she can't move him. Poor Uncle Arthur's stuck more in the door

than out. I can see that. How often have I thought that somebody would come to the front door just like Uncle Arthur and now, and now . . . Oh, I am so happy! I know what, I will run out through the "Tradesmen only". That is what I will do. I have a penny-halfpenny in my money-box and I will run out and buy Uncle Arthur a bun, or two buns, in the corner shop. Nobody will see me. He, he, he!

(Music to a finish.)

BRIDIE CHILDREN'S VOICES. Lily, Lily Albion! Where are you going?

Lily, dear, come and play with us. Bah! Lily, you are stuck up.

Lily, Lily, Lily, . . . *(ad lib., and fade.)*

MRS. ALBION. You are a big, big, bad, wilful beast. That is what you are. Coming and sticking yourself in my front door. Heavens, what will the neighbours think! What will George think when he gets home?

ELEPHANT. I'm your Uncle Arthur.

(Mrs. A.'s theme.)

MRS. ALBION. Uncle Arthur! What was it that was always said in the family about Uncle Arthur? I never knew quite what, but everybody closes up like a clam. George says he went to prison for an unmentionable crime. An unmentionable crime . . . Think of that. We have always kept it from Lily, and we have always kept it from the neighbours. I don't suppose the words "Uncle Arthur" have been mentioned in our house for twelve years—not since we came to "The Croft". Uncle Arthur . . . It gives me the quakes. It gives me a queer cold feeling like a key being put down my back. Uncle Arthur . . . an unmentionable crime . . . prison . . .

(Cut theme.)

What will the neighbours say? What will George say when he comes back.

ELEPHANT. I'm your Uncle Arthur.

(Mrs. A.'s theme, piano.)

MRS. ALBION. The neighbours, yes. Look at Mrs. Carver when her sister was divorced. She was hardly able to go out of the house, and everyone sent her anonymous letters. What would they think of elephants, come to that? Huge, ugly elephants! And suppose he begins to trumpet! What will happen if he begins to trumpet? What will happen if the Stark children begin looking through the laurels and see him wedged in the front door?

(Cut theme.)

Come in then, if you must. I will put you into the conservatory till George comes home from work and mind out or you will have the door off its hinges.

[This excerpt is the equivalent of pp. 84-87 (top) of *The Albions' Secret* in our Spring issue. It represents a third of the radio script—Ed.]

ABOUT THE MARIONETTE THEATRE

By HEINRICH VON KLEIST (1777-1811)

(Translated by Cherna Murray)

WHEN, IN THE winter of 1801, I was staying at M., I met one night in a public garden Mr. C., who had recently been employed in this town as the leading dancer of the Opera and had had an extraordinary success with his audiences.

I told him I had been surprised to see him several times in a marionette theatre which was set up in the market where it delighted the common people with little dramatic burlesques interwoven with song and dance.

He assured me that the pantomime of these puppets gave him great pleasure, and urged that a dancer who wished to perfect his art could learn many things from them.

Because, by his sincerity of manner, this suggestion seemed more than a passing remark, I sat down beside him to learn the arguments with which he could support such a strange statement.

He asked me if I did not really find some of the dancing movements of the puppets, especially of the small ones, very graceful.

I could not deny this fact. A group of four peasants dancing a *ronde* in a quick measure could not be portrayed more prettily by Teniers.

I inquired about the mechanism of the puppets, and how it was possible to direct their single limbs and their points as the rhythm of the movements or the dance demanded, without having myriads of threads on one's fingers.

He replied that I must not imagine that every limb was separately placed and pulled by the operator during the different moments of the dance. Every movement, he explained, had a centre of gravity; it was sufficient to direct that within the puppet, and the limbs being nothing but pendulums followed mechanically without assistance. This movement was very simple, he added; whenever the centre of gravity was moved in a straight line, the limbs described a curve, and often, if shaken accidentally, the whole figure developed a kind of rhythmical movement as in a dance.

This remark threw the first light on the pleasure which he obviously found in the marionette theatre. But I hardly anticipated the conclusions which later he drew from it.

I asked him if he thought that the operator must be a dancer himself or, at least, have an idea of the beauty of the dance.

He replied that if a thing were easy from the mechanical side, it did not follow that it could be carried out quite without any feeling. The line that the centre of gravity had to describe was very simple, and, he thought, in most cases straight. If it were curvilinear, the law of flexure

seemed to be of the first order, or, at the most, of the second, and even in this case only elliptical. This form of movement was generally natural to the extreme tips of the human body because of the joints, and so it was not difficult for the operator to carry it out. On the other hand, there was some mystery in this line. For this was nothing else than the path of the dancer's soul, and he doubted if it could be discovered in any other way than that the operator must imagine himself in the centre of gravity of the marionettes ; in other words, that he danced.

I replied that I had been told that this work was rather dull, nearly as dull as turning the handle of a barrel-organ.

"Not at all," he answered, "on the contrary, the movements of his fingers bear a rather intricate relationship to the movement of the puppets fixed on them, almost as numbers to their logarithms, or the asymptote to the hyperbola." However, he thought even this last fraction of mind of which he spoke could be removed from the marionettes ; their dance could be entirely carried into the realm of mechanical forces, and produced by a handle, as I imagined.

I was astonished to find how much attention he had paid to this variety of the fine arts invented for the common people. Not only did he think it capable of a higher development, he even concerned himself with it.

He smiled, saying he dared to assert that, if a mechanic were to construct a marionette according to the requirements which he would demand, he could perform a dance with it which neither he nor any skilled dancer of his time, not even Vestris,¹ could attain.

"Have you," he asked, when I cast down my eyes in silence, "have you heard of the mechanical legs which English craftsmen make for the miserable people who have lost their thighs ?" I said no, I had never seen such things. "That is a pity," he answered, "for when I tell you that these unfortunates dance with these legs, I almost fear you will not believe me. What am I telling you, they dance ? The scope of their movements is indeed limited, but those which they master are carried out with a calm, ease, and grace astonishing to every thinking mind."

I said jokingly he had found his man, for the craftsman who is able to build such a remarkable leg could, without doubt, also construct a complete marionette to accord with his requirements.

When he, on his part, looked down a little embarrassed, I asked : "What are the demands which you would make of his skill ?"

"Nothing," he replied, "but the qualities already present : symmetry, mobility, ease ; only, all in a higher degree, and particularly a more natural arrangement of the centres of gravity."

"And what advantage would this puppet have over a living dancer ?"

"What advantage ? Above all, dear friend, a negative one, to wit, it would never behave affectedly. For you know, affectation is shown

¹ The famous Parisian dancer of the beginning of the last century.

when the soul (*Vis motrix*) is at a point other than that of the centre of gravity of the movement. Since the operator does not control, with wire or thread, any other point but this, all the limbs are dead, mere pendulums; what they do follows only the law of gravity, an excellent quality which is sought in vain by the greater number of our dancers."

"Look at Miss P. When, performing Daphne pursued by Apollo, she looks behind her," he continued, "her soul is in the small of her back. She bends as if she would break, as a Naiad from the school of Bernini.¹ Look at young F. when he stands as Paris amid the three goddesses and delivers the apple to Venus. His soul, how horrible to see, is right in his elbow."

"Such mistakes are unavoidable," he added, breaking off, "since we ate from the Tree of Knowledge. But Paradise is bolted, and the cherub is behind us; we must make a voyage round the world and discover whether Paradise is perhaps open at the back."

I laughed. To be sure, I thought, the mind cannot err, where there is none. But I felt that he had something further weighing on his mind, and asked him to continue.

"Moreover," he said, "these puppets have the advantage of being 'antigrave'.² They are not hindered with the inertness of matter, the quality most resistant to dancing, because the lifting power is greater than that which keeps them down. What would not good G. give if she could be lighter by seventy pounds, or if such a weight would help her in her *entrechats* and pirouettes? The puppets, like the fairies, need the floor only to touch and enliven the swing of their limbs by momentarily retarding their action. We need the floor to rest and refresh ourselves from the strain of dancing; a moment which is not really dancing and with which we can do nothing but show it as little as possible."

I said that however cleverly he pleaded the cause of his paradoxes, he would never make me think that there could be more charm in a mechanical puppet than in the structure of the human body.

He replied that it was quite impossible for the man to come up to the puppet. Only a God could equal Matter in this, and there lay the point where the two ends of the ring-shaped world fitted into each other.

I was more and more astonished and did not know what to say to such strange assertions.

It seemed, he continued while taking a pinch of snuff, that I had not attentively read the third chapter of the first book of Moses; if someone did not know this first period of all human formation, one surely could not discuss with him the following periods, much less the last ones.

I said I indeed knew what confusion consciousness had made in the natural charm of mankind. A young man of my acquaintance had, before my very eyes, lost his innocence by a single remark and never regained

¹ Giovanni Lorenzo Bernini, a sculptor of pompous Baroque style, died 1680.

² Kleist means by "anti-grave" . . . endowed with a force opposed to gravity.

that first Paradise, in spite of the greatest possible pains. "But what conclusions do you draw from that?" I added. He inquired about the event of which I spoke.

I told him, "I bathed, about three years ago, with a young man who at that time possessed extraordinary charm. He might have been about sixteen, and only indistinctly could one see the first traces of vanity caused by women's favour. We had recently seen in Paris 'The youth drawing a thorn from his foot'. The copy of this statue is well known and is present in most German collections. A glance he cast in a large mirror, while putting his foot on a stool to dry it, reminded him of this statue. He smiled, and told me of the discovery he had made. I had had the same idea but, either to test the strength of his charm, or to damp his vanity a little, I laughed, and replied that he saw ghosts. He blushed, and lifted his foot again to prove it, but the experiment failed, as could have been foreseen. Confused, he lifted his foot three, four, perhaps even ten times. In vain, he was unable to produce the same movement again. On the contrary, his movements now had such a comical element that I could hardly refrain from laughing. From that day, so to speak from that moment, an inconceivable change occurred in the young man. He began to stand before the mirror for days, and lost one charm after another. An invisible and inconceivable power had come like an iron net about the free play of his gestures, and after one year there was not a trace of his charm which before had delighted the eyes of his companions." There is someone still living, I added, who was a witness of that strange and unhappy event, and can confirm it word by word, as I have told it

"On this occasion," Mr. C. said kindly, "I can tell you another story which you will realise is apt here. During my travels in Russia I was on the estate of Baron G., a Livonian nobleman whose sons spent much of their time in the practice of fencing. Particularly, the elder one, who had just returned from the university, excelled in it, and offered me a rapier one morning when I was in his room. We fought, but it happened that I was superior to him. Passion intervened to confuse him. Almost every pass I made struck home, and his rapier flew at last into the corner. Partly joking, partly annoyed, he said as he picked up the rapier that he had found his master, but everyone on earth finds theirs, and he would lead me to mine. The brothers laughed aloud, calling: 'Forward, forward! Down to the woodshed.' They took me by the hand, and led me to a bear whom Baron G., their father, reared in the yard. When I, astonished, approached the bear, he stood on his hind-feet, leaning his back against a post to which he was chained, and, looking me full in the face, he raised his right paw ready for battle; that was his posture. I did not know if I were dreaming, finding myself opposed to such an antagonist. 'Thrust, thrust,' Baron G. said, 'and try to strike him.' After I had recovered from my astonishment, I lunged at him with the

rapier, and the bear, making a short movement with his paw, parried the pass. I tried to deceive him by feints, the bear did not move. I attacked him afresh with skill momentarily inspired. I would have surely struck a man's breast. The bear made only a short movement with his paw and parried the pass. I was now almost in the same situation as the young Baron G. The bear's seriousness intervened to upset my composure. I made alternate passes and feints. I dripped with sweat. In vain ; the bear not only parried all my passes like the first fighter of the world, he did not accept my feints ; no fighter on earth could have done that. Eye to eye, as if he could read my mind, he stood raising his paw ready for battle, and when my passes were not really meant he did not move. Do you believe this story ? ”

“ Wholly,” I shouted, applauding joyfully. “ I would believe it from anyone, so probable is it, and all the more I believe it from you.”

“ Then, my excellent friend, you should be able to understand me. We see that the darker and weaker is Reflection in the organic world, the more apparent Grace becomes, shining and ruling. But, as the intersection of two lines, from the one side of a point, after passing through the infinite, returns suddenly to the other side ; or, the image of a concave mirror after moving into the infinite appears suddenly again, near and before us ; so, when Knowledge has gone, so to speak, through the infinite, Grace returns again, appearing at the same time, most purely in the structure of a body which has either no knowledge, or an infinite knowledge, to wit : in a marionette or in a God.”

“ Therefore, we must eat again of the Tree of Knowledge to return to a state of innocence ? ” I said, a little distracted.

“ Indeed,” he answered, “ that is the last chapter in the history of the world.”

GEORG BÜCHNER

ON THE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS DEATH

By HUGO F. KOENIGSGARTEN

(Translated by Cherna Murray)

GERMANY WAS THE only country which had had no "Great Revolution" and the only one in which the forms of life and society of *l'ancien régime* lasted far into the nineteenth century. On the contrary, it was in Germany that those forces were born which spread over the whole of Europe in resistance against the ideas of the French Revolution and which are still effective to-day: "Romanticism," philosophical "Idealism," and "Nationalism," her most important product. At the time when the whole Continent was shaken by the storms of the Revolution and the Napoleonic wars, in the small towns of Weimar and Jena the German spirit was at its highest and purest, untouched by political and military events. Such was the German destination: while the western countries used all their energies to reform their political and social structures, in Germany these energies flowed, as it were, inwards,—while the others shared the conquest of the globe, Germany—in her great personalities—explored the realm of spirit and soul. This applies especially in that post-revolutionary epoch of general repercussion, which is known, politically, as the period of Metternich, culturally, as the "Biedermeier". Under the constricting chains of a conservative system of police, which cruelly suppressed all liberties, the spiritual impulses concentrated on the sphere of Art and Literature, and, beside Philosophy and Music, particularly on the Drama and Lyrical poetry.

Both drama and lyrical poetry are the essential elements of Georg Büchner. He belongs to those lonely and tragic natures who are consumed untimely by their own flame. Born in 1813 near Darmstadt, he died on the 19th February, 1837, at Zuerich, in his 24th year. His work is scarce, and fragmentary like his life: three small dramas and one short novel—all unfinished and in fragments—that is all. Hardly anything was printed in his lifetime—only many decades after his death his work had an unexpected resurrection. To-day he is one of the few great geniuses of the German drama.

* * *

His home country was Hessen—that south-western corner of Germany which was always considered her most broad-minded and active region: open to the democratic and liberal influences of her neighbours, France and Switzerland. His father was a small country doctor, he himself chose the medical career. At the Universities of

Giessen and Strassburg he studied medicine and natural science ; he accepted the appointment of lecturer at the University of Zuerich, where he died of typhoid, at the full tide of his hopes and ideas. This was his outer life.

In Strassburg, he came in contact with a literary circle ; there he walked in the steps of young Goethe and his friend Reinhold Lenz who met with so sad a death ; there he was swept by the wind of the great political ideas which stirred up the France of the July revolution of 1830. Returned home, he took the part of the oppressed, supporting a revolt of the Hessian peasants by a flaming manifesto : " Peace to the cottages ! War to the palaces ! " and he immediately fell into conflict with the State authorities. After his house was searched, the place became too hot for him and he decided to fly to Strassburg. In order to raise money he wrote—as in a fever—at his father's dissection-table—his first drama, *Death of Danton*.

This play of revolution—the only work he left almost completed—reveals already all the elements of Buchner's dramatic art : the sequence of short chaotic scenes passing as in a dream ; the wild and passionate language which often revels in brutal coarseness ; the gloomy-balladic ground-colour and tragic fatalism pervading throughout. Certain influences and exuberances still mark it as a first production, but on the whole it is an accomplished masterpiece—the prodigious manifestation of a precocious genius walking aloft on lonely heights. *Death of Danton* is by no means what the poet thought, perhaps, to make of it : a drama of the revolution. The revolution is like a great stream of blood, in which single beings whirl like molecules, without a will of their own, attracting and repelling each other, fighting and destroying. " We did not make the revolution—the revolution made us," says Danton once. It is the sinister incarnation of Fate hanging over everybody. The work is pervaded by a dark fatalism from which there is no escape. Danton himself is not a revolutionary—he has already done his deeds when he enters the play, and he awaits the mortal blow wearily and drunk with death, like a victim. There is something of Hamlet in this man, who does not act because he thinks too much.

Hamlet . . . by that is called up the spirit of one who was of decisive significance for this as well as for the whole poetical work of Georg Buchner : Shakespeare ! Just as for young Goethe, also at Strassburg, sixty years before, the great English dramatist was also the transforming experience for Buchner : his technique of irregular scenes with incessant change of location, is Shakespearean ; the passionate language revelling in metaphors, the ribald jests of the common people, are Shakespearean ; Shakespearean also is the bizarre melancholy of the chief characters, especially of Danton himself.

Shakespeare's spirit also pervades George Buchner's only comedy, *Leonce and Lena*—perhaps the most floating, airy, sparkling comedy of

the German language. It is purely a fairy-tale play, light as a soap-bubble which yet reflects the whole world in its iridescent refraction. This—more than any other of the poet's works—is the product of that literary current which then dominated German literature : Romanticism. Leonce is a brother of Eichendorff's *Taugenichts* ; he too sets out for Italy, the country of his longing, of " deep and wild nights full of masks, torches and guitars ". Eichendorff's dreaming playfulness, the fairy-poetry of Tieck and Brentano interweaves the enchanting play which sprang from a happy hour of the tragic poet. And yet Buchner's spirit is in every word—in the melancholic sarcasm of Prince Leonce, in vagabond Valerio's grotesque foolishness, in the fatalistic surrender to a destiny which here unravels into playful incident. The action is nothing—Leonce, the idling prince of an imaginary little state, runs away with his friend Valerio, alarmed by a marriage which is forced upon him ; but on his way he meets Lena, the princess chosen for him, who is also escaping ; and unsuspectingly, under the mask of marionettes, they are married. The background of a minor court is shown with biting sarcasm in the caricatures of King Peter and of his ridiculous royal household, but the poet's heart is beating in the figure of Prince Leonce, who again has something of Hamlet in his youthful precocity, his melancholy foolishness ; but now touched by the magic wand of Love he is lifted out of his aimless isolation into blissful union with another being.

This enchanting comedy, which was written for a literary competition arranged by Cotta, the well-known publisher, remains, however, the only gay product of Büchner. In his only epic attempt—the short novel, *Lenz*—he again treats a dark subject : the life of the poet Reinhold Lenz who became insane and met with an early death. A profound inner kinship attracted him to the unhappy friend of young Goethe in whose steps he walked at Strassburg. Lenz was perhaps the most highly gifted poet among the young " Stürmer und Dränger ", he was broken by the surpassing genius of his happier friend, Goethe : he had loved, unhappily, the same girl—Friederike Brion, of Sesenheim ; like him, he tried his chance at the court of Weimar, but in vain, and in the end he was devoured by the flame which burnt in him. Büchner chose the last chapter of this tragic life for his story, when the poet finds, after aimless wanderings in the Vosges mountains, a welcome in the house of Vicar Oberlin and sinks there into the night of the derangement which slowly overshadows his mind. It is a picture of moving realistic power, both a clinical study and an artistic creation. Unmistakably the medical man was contributing here, but, with all its psychological realism, it is a vision of a poet : the growing insanity is witnessed inwardly—the impressions of the outer world : men, nature, the reminiscence of the beloved one he lost, are flashing phantomlike into his clouded mind. This novel stands by itself in the literature of the nineteenth century—till the great pathological creations of Dostoievski.

It remained fragmentary—the magazine *Deutsche Revue* of Karl Gutzkow, Büchner's first protector and patron, for which it was written, was suppressed by the censorship—and so the work remained unfinished. Georg Büchner's last work, the drama *Wozzek*, is also a fragment. It was only deciphered laboriously from yellow pages by Karl Emil Franzos, forty years after his death, and then committed to an astonished public. This work is unique in the literature of the time—its influences came to life only two generations later and are not weakened to this day. Any exuberance, any loquacity of his first dramas, are conquered—the events roll on, powerful and concise, as a gloomy ballade: the story of the poor soldier Wozzek, who is sneered at and oppressed by everybody and from whom is taken the only one he loves, his wife Mary. There is not one superfluous word in this unique poetic work—Wozzek submits to his fate, dumb as an animal, dumb he revolts against it and, as under a compulsion, he stabs his beloved through the breast. And yet this silent cry is shouting to the world—it is more than a social indictment, it is the cry of the tormented creature, the hollow and primitive sound of game harassed to death by its torturers. Here exists no redeeming conformity of crime and atonement—Fate weighing gloomily and inevitably on this small world of characters: the wife is instinctively carried away by the drum-major's animal virility, and Wozzek, guiltless and as if whipped by the Furies, follows his path of suffering to its bloody end. Life as suffering—that is the message of poor soldier Wozzek.

“Suffering be all my prize,
Suffering be my divine service”—

This old sentence is written significantly in two works of the poet, in *Wozzek* and in *Lenz*. The poet Lenz is struggling with religious ideas in the night of his derangement, he preaches in church, he even identifies himself with the figure of Christ himself, when he tries to recall a dead child to life: poor soldier Wozzek thinks of his mother's Bible before he commits the murder. Suffering as Life's deepest substance—this eternal message of Christian teaching is the keynote of Büchner's work—and it vibrates from this to the novels of the great Russians, and to Gerhard Hauptmann's characters.

This work stands out completely isolated in its contemporary literature, among the shallow comedies of the day and the empty verse-dramas of the later classics. The form of these dramas, the balladic breaking-up into short scenes, the peculiar mixture of crass realism with gloomy lyrics, did not exercise its influence till much later: it resounds in Wedekind's bizarre fantastic poetry, in *Frühlingserwachen* as well as in Gerhard Hauptmann's (folk-rooted) realism, in *die Weber* and in *Fuhrmann Henschel*, who is a younger brother of Wozzek. But

Expressionism also refers to Buchner and there is something of the melody of *Wozzek* vibrating in Bert Brecht's early dramas.

* * *

The loss German literature suffered from Georg Büchner's untimely death is irreparable. But it may be in the nature of this meteoric genius that he burnt prematurely, in the vehemence of his own fire. Thus he is among those immortal youths, as Novalis and Hölderlin, who, unrecognized and lonely in their time, live in the memory of their people.

WILLIAM WALTON

By ERIC WALTER WHITE

IT IS WELL known that the Great War acted as a purge on most composers. Some of them, taking their cue from machinery and collectivist ideology, launched a new type of music, anti-sentimental, stream-lined, objective. Not so William Walton. Although his two earliest works, the seldom-heard String and Piano Quartets, made it clear that he had assimilated his dose of post-war Stravinsky, each subsequent stage in his career has shown him to be a man of sentiment and feeling.

The first of Walton's characteristics to strike the public were wit and malice. *Façade* was composed in 1923 as a setting of certain poems by Edith Sitwell, an entertainment for speaking voice and instruments. (The well-known concert suite is a later and revised version.) Even if the Sitwells are not always witty themselves, they can be the cause of wit in others; and *Façade* is one of the wittiest of all musical parodies. Stravinsky, Shostakovitch, and most of *les Six* have all tried in their time to exploit this tantalising vein; but none has succeeded so spontaneously as Walton. It should be noted that he has wisely never attempted to repeat this success. *Portsmouth Point* (1926) may be breezy, boisterous, and coarse—there is something artificial about its imperturbably unflagging high spirits—but it owes much less to its illustrator, Rowlandson, than does *Façade* to its poet. Malice occasionally recurs in the composer's later works: there is a hint of it in the *Sinfonia Concertante* (1928), and its presence is openly advertised in the *Scherzo* to the *Symphony* (1935). But after *Portsmouth Point*, Walton's prevailing mood seems to have changed to one of melancholy and meditation. The first signs of this occurred in the slow movement of the *Sinfonia Concertante*. Only a year elapsed before the *Viola Concerto* (1929) made it clear once and for all that Walton was something more than a clever young man in a hurry. This concerto reveals the most intimate understanding of the shy and melancholy instrument for which it was written. It is unthinkable that anyone should ever attempt to adapt it for another instrument, as has been done in the case of certain other concertos.

The lull, however, did not last for long. In 1931 *Belshazzar's Feast* burst like a bomb, disrupting the placid atmosphere of English oratorio: its bombast and barbarism will remain a perpetual provocation to choral societies in this country. Four years later, the completed *Symphony* launched a tremendous assault on the ears of the concert-going public; but its ceaseless bombardment was never for one moment allowed to drown the composer's magniloquent musical rhetoric. If the enemy were unwilling to be battered into submission, then Walton was ready to convince him by the most persuasive and impassioned arguments.

Here is a composer who can be witty, malicious, melancholy, meditative, barbaric, pompous, passionate, rhetorical, and angry : yet none of these are necessarily musical qualities. They may be present in a musical work ; but they are always of secondary importance to considerations of rhythm, melody, and form.

The speed of twentieth-century life has made us impatient of delay. Where seventeenth- and eighteenth-century music progressed at a leisurely walking pace, the modern composer is in a perpetual hurry to finish before his nervous audience becomes bored. Few people to-day, when listening to works such as *The Messiah* or the B minor Mass, are able to slow down their receptive faculties sufficiently to avoid the impression that they are being presented with a work in slow-motion. Walton has an acute time-sense and a modern appreciation of the value of speed. This has sometimes blinded critics to the value of his scherzos ; they think that, because these movements pass in a flash, they are empty and spurious. Some of them also object to his use of syncopation. There may certainly have been an overdose of it in *Portsmouth Point*, and the habit of dividing a bar of common time into quavers grouped 3 + 3 + 2 became almost a nervous tic in the Sinfonia Concertante ; but even a cursory examination of *Belshazzar's Feast* or the Symphony will show the value of such a metrical training and how it has helped to develop his conception of rhythm.

There is a rhythmic device in *Belshazzar's Feast* which deserves special attention. Three times in the course of that oratorio occur directions for a graduated *pizz mosso* extending over a number of bars ; thereby the tempo is almost doubled. But once the beat has been quickened, the main theme is broadened out and continues at a relatively slower speed over the throbbing metrical pulse. This is the exact opposite of the device used by Honegger to suggest acceleration in his *Pacific* 231, where the metronome beat is progressively slowed up to permit the introduction of relatively faster and faster themes in crotchets, quavers, quaver-triplets, semiquavers, etc. (A composer like Stravinsky, who disapproves of *accelerandi* and *ritardandi*, would probably obtain a similar effect of excitement by making a gear-change in tempo.)

The curious will find it interesting to note how Walton seems to be preoccupied by certain motifs, which recur throughout his work. Take the interval of the third, for instance. This interval in its simplest form is hammered out at the beginning of the third movement of the Sinfonia Concertante ; the Viola Concerto opens with an undulating melody formed by a chain of thirds ; six years later the same linked melody suffers a slight change and reappears as a kind of second subject in the first movement of the Symphony (section 7) ; while the Scherzo to the same Symphony opens with a riot of thirds bobbing about like a string of corks floating in water. It is the same with the interval of the sixth, the complement to the third. The usual chain of sixths makes its

appearance as part of the second subject of the slow movement of the Sinfonia Concertante and in such a form as to forecast its more extended use a year later in the first and third movements of the Viola Concerto and even to anticipate the characteristic clash between major and minor, which Sir Donald Tovey calls the initial and final motto of the whole Concerto. Two consecutive rising intervals of the fourth provide the main theme for both the Scherzo of the Viola Concerto and the fugato passage of the last movement of the Symphony (section 112). Important use is made of the interval of a minor ninth in the figuration work of the first two movements of the Sinfonia Concertante and also the middle section of *Belshazzar's Feast*. And many other similar correspondences can easily be found.

It may seem trivial or ungenerous to stress Walton's preoccupation with certain fixed motifs; but the conclusion any unbiased critic is bound to arrive at is, not that he is poor in invention, but that he is economical with his material and does not lightly relinquish an idea once it has occurred to him. In fact, each successive work shows steady consolidation of the ground already covered, a broadening of outlook, and a clearer grasp of the principles of form.

In *Façade*, the form of the Suite was postulated from the outset by the metrical and stylistic problems raised by Edith Sitwell's poems. *Portsmouth Point* was a hornpipe magnified into an overture. The two concertos are constructed in an ingenious way. The Sinfonia Concertante consists of three movements—Allegro spiritoso, Andante comodo, Allegro molto—dedicated respectively to Osbert, Edith, and Sacheverell Sitwell. The Viola Concerto has three movements too, but arranged in a complementary fashion—Andante comodo, Vivo, Allegro moderato. The first movement opens with the melody consisting of a chain of thirds mentioned above; the second with a theme consisting of two rising fourths; the last with a somewhat fugal subject consisting of two rising fifths. *Belshazzar's Feast* retains the triptych construction, and each of its three sections is treated in *a b a* form; but every time the main subject of a section returns for recapitulation, Walton is not satisfied with its mere repetition, but goes to considerable pains to develop it still further. As all three sections consist of exceedingly strenuous choral and orchestral material, it was necessary to find some point of contrast and repose, if the music was not completely to lose its effect and stupify, instead of stimulating or scandalizing, its audience. He solved this problem in a most ingenious way. Where Handel and most other oratorio composers would have allowed their audience to relax by interpolating formal arias, duets, etc., Walton has gone a stage farther and separated each section of his oratorio by stretches of unaccompanied recitative for baritone solo, thereby obtaining the greatest chiaroscuro possible.

The Symphony posed an even bigger problem in construction. It is

well known how it was announced for 1934, but when, after various postponements, it was ultimately performed, it lacked its final movement. Each of the first three movements was self-contained ; but the fourth, when it at last appeared, was found to be, not only a coda to the other movements, but also a microcosm of the symphony itself. The key to the superb *maestoso* prologue with which it opens is to be found in a strange outburst marked *poco allargando e declamato* in the slow movement (just before section 98). The next episode, *Brioso ed ardentemente*, the first section proper of the finale, is founded mainly on the *maestoso* material much speeded up. It leads to a double fugato passage, the first subject of which is marked *focosamente* and the second *espressivo*. At the recapitulation the time-signature changes to 3/8, a characteristic scherzo tempo ; and the movement concludes with an epilogue, which is a resumption of the opening *maestoso*, but in a more spacious form. This makes one of the boldest designs in all symphonic construction ; in certain respects it deliberately challenges comparison with Beethoven's 9th. No other English composer has ever dared as much and got away with it.

Although Walton's output is so restricted, it is to be hoped that he will lose no time in following up his Coronation March with a Violin Concerto, and then a ballet, and perhaps later even an opera. In any event he has already succeeded in putting England back on the musical map of Europe after a lapse of more than two centuries ; and for this he deserves our profoundest gratitude.

A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE BRITISH FILM

By ROBERT HERRING

NOT A VERY wise bird, perhaps ; but at least fledged and certainly independent, and though I should perhaps apologise for seeming to fill up the cinema section this issue, I feel that so much has lately been said about the parlous state of the British film industry that where so many have approached the whole sorry subject financially, frantically, flag-wavingly, or just threateningly, it would be well—and couldn't do harm—to look at the matter from another angle, the historical.

We can cut out the old claims as to who invented cinema ; Friese-Greene in 1889 obtained the first patent for a camera that took moving pictures and there, as far as I am concerned, claims can end. Paul, who exhibited his " theatrograph " at the Alhambra, London, in 1896, made his films on the roof of that theatre, and these were the earliest to tell a story. America did not make a story-film till 1903. It may be remarked that one of the earliest news-films in existence is that showing the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria, whilst Paul equalled modern news-service by showing a film of the Derby the day after the race.

Cherry Kearton was another pioneer. In 1903 he made the first movies of bird-life. Their stereoscopy is remarkable even according to the standards of to-day. Kearton made his bird-pictures at Elstree ; it happened that he lived there, but it has also happened that Elstree was lately regarded as the producing centre of the British cinema, so it is amusing to find that the claim is substantiated, and substantiated by a kind of film, the instructional, in which English movie-makers have always most happily expressed themselves. Kearton, in 1904, made the first flight over London. In an airship, with no cabin. He showed the film two nights later, at the Alhambra. He was the first man to use a telephoto lens, which has made possible the high spots of such pictures as *Chang* and he has gone on in his chosen line, the nature-film, right from the early bird-films of 1903 to to-day, when he has compiled a film-autobiography from all the pictures he made during those thirty-odd years.

With news-reels, natural history (forerunners of documentary) and story-films being made, there was in those early days a definite British cinema. Indeed, it led the world. Cecil Hepworth began filming in 1898, in a studio where production has gone on ever since. One of his original players, Alma Taylor, has begun a new career as a television star. At the same time, James Williamson was producing between sixty and eighty films a week near Brighton. They were only one-reelers.

Even so, it seems incredible that they were admired for their camera-work. Yet that was a fact. In those days, English films were technically ahead of the rest and sold well in America, where pictures were still produced cheaply and crudely. It was in just that quality in which it was later worst that the early English movie excelled. One of the most interesting facts about the Hove studios, however, was that it saw the birth of the film-star. I am indebted to the author of *The Romance of the Movies* for the information that ex-Sergeant Major Chart, gymnasium instructor, earning a few extra pounds a week as movie actor, was the first man to interest audiences more in the star than in the story. It was suggested, his photograph being so powerful, that post-cards be issued and a contemporary reviewer inquired, "Has a new method of drawing audiences been discovered?"

By 1908 Hepworth was making talkies, with Vivaphone (the French firm of Gaumont followed with Chronophone two years later), and in 1911 E. A. Bawtree recorded sound on film, and talkies (starring George Robey), were being shown at the London Pavilion, two years before Edison's "Kinetophone" appeared in America.

The coloured coronation-film (*George V*) was one of the famous films of its period. Albert Smith, who put out Kinemacolor in 1908, had to withdraw it because it actually infringed earlier colour-patents of Friese-Greene. Paul also coloured films—by hand. One contained 112,000 pictures, and that meant that a small army of men tinted them, at the rate of 128 pictures a day.

Then, in the language of our subject, then Came the War. English studios were used for governmental propaganda-pictures. When the war ended, not only had the Americans been able to progress uninterruptedly, but the English studios were ill-equipped and old-fashioned. They grew more and more out of date, simply by remaining the same—a cause-and-effect the English are always reluctant to comprehend. The pictures made in them grew less and less popular. The stars who had worked there flitted to Hollywood. The English mentality, slow also in admitting it is beaten, was gradually made to realise that the English cinema was decaying.

The Quota Act of 1927, forcing every British cinema to show a proportion of British films, helped the trade to revive. New studios were built. Little notice was taken of trans-Atlantic rumours of talkies, so no provision was made for sound-recording and the firm of British and Dominions Films came into being, actually making silent films as late as 1928. The first American talkies reached London in the autumn of that year (British Phonofilm at the Capitol just managing to steal a rather forced march on Vitaphone at the Piccadilly), and Alfred Hitchcock, with his *Blackmail*, made in 1929, showed that imagination might still count, even in talkies. It was a good effort and seemed to bid well, but what happened since denies that, so all one can do is to

draw attention to the fact that *Blackmail* opened our eyes, or at least made us unstop our ears, despite having been made first as a silent and then with a voice-double for Anny Ondra, who did not speak English.

There was no logical reason for the panic into which English studios were flung by sound; it had been going on in America since 1926. But it is precisely this habit of being generally out-of-date, whilst occasionally to the fore, which is typical of England. It explains why English cinema has failed to keep pace with English life. Good men are held back by out-of-date methods or good ideas are ruined by men belonging to a past period. Up to the nineteen-thirties this absence of contemporaneity was still typical. After that, it became less so as the "English film" began to be more and more often made by men of almost any other nationality but English. Ever since 1930 the British cinema tried to be world-wide before it had even succeeded in being national. That, in the cinema, is impossible. I do not mean that films must be flag-wagging. I do not mean "Britons for the British". But every cinema which counts, as a body of films, has a style and a speed of its own. The Soviet cinema is as distinct from the Swedish as the old German from the old Italian or the Indian from the Dutch. The French and the American have preserved continuity; you can not only distinguish the films of those countries, you can date them.

You can date English films right enough, all right. Usually a few years back, in outlook, from when they were made. You can remember the *Coming Thro The Rye*, *Virgin Queen* period; you can date the first *Hindle Wakes* and *The Lodger*. You may remember the exaggerated excitement caused by *The Ring*. But you will always find that these English films were not only hints of a dawn that never came, but watery sunsets compared to the other films being made in other countries at the same time. There is no year in which, however good a British film may be, a French, Russian, German, or American has not surpassed it. Plenty of British films may be as good as those made last year in other countries. But that is hardly the point; it wouldn't have helped Webster much to have written a play that nearly matched Marlowe after Shakespeare had cropped up meanwhile.

The reason why the British film is always the strap-hanger; the fellow that doesn't get the bus; that is waiting, with engine steamed up, whilst the lights are against him, seems to me this:—we are not a visual race. I often think prudery makes us think there is something sinful in seeing. Be that as it may, whilst the French genius is primarily pictorial, the Italian musical, the English is literary. The inhabitants of this island express themselves most readily in words. "I say," is the English phrase; "voyez-vous" the French. With no desire to be either sweeping or belittling, I would say that at every period our literary artists have exceeded our musical, pictorial, architectural, even

when those periods were most subject to outside influence. And to-day, I would say that though we still produce players and poets, forty years of film has given us no really visual director, whilst the failure of our scenarists to see a script in pictorial terms is the notorious reason for the failure, not to say the postponement, of so many long-advertised films.

England has no film-centre comparable to Hollywood. Though so far all pictures have been made within reach of London, they have been made in scattered studios. Some in the heart of London, such as Gaumont's, some at Islington, where Gainsborough first indicated what might be done. Two, by the Thames, have facilities for outdoor work, so that I could watch scenes for *Sanders of the River*, *The Iron Duke*, and *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, in one day at Shepperton. There are studios at Wembley and Beaconsfield. There are the new ones at Pinewood, where Gaumont are now, with outside help, finishing what they can't afford to begin in their own. There is, of course, Denham.

At Welwyn, five years ago, there was the studio of British Instructional where, in addition to the pictures indicated by the title, Anthony Asquith made some pictures which starred Mady Christians and Uno Henning. But to most of the British public, Elstree was long regarded as the centre of British production. It is true there is more than one studio there. Bergner worked at Elstree, Korda made (why ?) *The Private Life of Don Juan*. But the biggest was B.I.P. and as that firm set out to make Elstree the "British Hollywood", and their pictures lived up to the worst side of that aim, Elstree came to mean something to English, which was not the best in English, production. Attempts have been made there. Dupont made a goodish *Informer* ; Veidt I first met, working on a tri-lingual ; Karl Grune made, with one Danish, one German, and one American star, a picture (*Abdul the Damned*), which was nearly, for an English, a good English picture. Hitchcock worked there, too. But on the whole, the Elstree film is exemplified by the popular pretty Tauber romances.

Gaumont, in 1932, opened their new studio at Lime Grove, in which to make films that had the polish of Hollywood but not its outlook. The first production, *Rome Express*, had a certain distinction, whilst still possessing the English faults of slowness and slovenly and superficial scenario. For some time, Gaumont were the hope of the British cinema. They lost ground, making comedies which weren't comic and musicals such as *Evergreen*, which only strengthened the conviction that musical-comedy is not England's film-metier. But, just as *Henry VIII* cast sad shadows of what were to come for Korda, *Jew Süss* and *Iron Duke* marked the beginning of the end for Gaumont. Dazzled by the discovery that British films could equal Hollywood's in production-value, they let the weightiness of their pictures become a millstone round their necks. That sank them. But they deserve, with our condolence, our

thanks. They weren't flamboyant, and without pretending to be "patriotic", they were the first to organise a production unit on a grand scale, and to pay attention to camerawork, lighting, décor, design, casting, and grooming of players. For all this, I venture to think they did rather more than the much publicised Alexander Korda, who first demanded our attention with a singularly sad version of Erskine's spontaneous satire, *Helen of Troy*; it has become the fashion, I notice, to say that film directors aren't responsible for the films put out under their name. That enables devotees of Flaherty to excuse him for *Elephant Boy* (though why anyone who saw *Man of Aran* should need any excuse, I can't imagine). I may be old-fashioned, but it seems to me there are two things permissible to any producer or director. One is, to refuse to make any film that seems to him ham. The other, to make it with such verve, it will be ham in a different way. But Korda gave us neither healthy ham nor good plain bread. The trouble with his films seems to me that they are neither sufficiently cynical on the one hand nor sufficiently sincere on the other. Looking at his programme, one is forced to the conclusion that no one could believe in it but himself—and one doubts even that.

We criticise Hollywood, we say Garbo should know better than romanticise the life of *Queen Christina*, but we accepted a *Henry VIII*, which had no hint of the poverty, dirt, or gusto of the time, no atmosphere and no feeling. A smaller film, made a year later, *Nell Gwynn*, succeeded far better in recreating the vulgarity of its period. Though I be amused at the idea of the star of *Nell Gwynn* and *Peg Woffington* playing Queen Victoria, I feel safer with Herbert Wilcox than I do with Herr Korda.

His next film was what even his most ardent admirer could only call "Catherine, the Great Disappointment". Bergner made it a success, but nothing could make a success of *Don Juan*. He retrieved himself with a skilful version of *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, and followed it with *Sanders of the River*—*Sanders*, which began as a film of the African race, and ended as a rehash of the Edgar Wallace. Old-fashioned as I am, I think this was the film in which I first realised that Korda knew how to use neither his plot nor his players, even when (or perhaps though) he was out for a popular success. The public won't agree with me on this, because they don't know how the script was altered. They don't know how at the press-view, the story on the synopsis differed from the story on the screen, or how much footage was wasted. They know *Sanders* was a success—if not because of Korda, because of Robeson. And whatever Robeson suffered in prestige from this film he made up later in popularity with the cheaper, but decenter because more Negro, *Song of Freedom*, made elsewhere.

We then had two lamentable Wells films, a much heralded picture

called *Moscow Nights* to which finally Korda didn't put his name, and, in *The Ghost Goes West*, something which showed what happened when René Clair crossed from Paris to London. After that, for those who cared, there was an untidy little opus called *Men Are Not Gods*, in which Miriam Hopkins, though miraculously miscast, did far better as a London journalist than did Gertrude Lawrence as Desdemona (hampered perhaps by the fact that no English stage-producer has yet suggested she play the role, least of all in blond wig and black negligée). Next, after much ballyhoo about a life of Elizabeth, came a film romance called *Fire Over England*, in which Flora Robson had to play the queen as if she were written by Guitry in the days when she were Yvonne Printemps. Robson made the film by being a Grace Darling to the wreck of a good picture. But she could no more give us Elizabeth than could Herr Alexander's outlook and family connection give us the *Toomai* of Kipling.

Korda never made an English film in the sense that *Tudor Rose*, *Turn of the Tide* and some of Hitchcock's fruitier sequences were English. Moreover, his films had no roots; they were founded on no culture. They were slick (sometimes), smart (in intention), superficial (in effect—because they related to nothing but studio). Denham fell into the Elstree-trap and tried to become a second Hollywood. For all its frequent shoddiness, Hollywood is founded on something fairly solid; achievement. Perhaps not of a high order, but solid. They could afford to make poor pictures, because they sometimes made good ones and they could risk unprofitable good ones because of an output that was regular, if unremarkable. England never got to that state, and whether it made quickies or what Mr. Korda now calls "prestige pictures" and we know as ill-budgeted pretensions, the result was the same. Flop.

Korda was led to his mistakes by the response awakened by his chief merit; he knew films are meant to be seen. He made them, if not always pleasant to see, at least, in the cant phrase, tolerably "easy to look at". Only two British directors had previously distinguished themselves in that—Asquith and Hitchcock. Asquith spoilt himself by an out-of-touchness with his subject, which made him, for instance, depict a well-paid railwayman toasting kippers on a poker; Hitchcock did himself wrong by refusing to develop. It may be that the conditions of his contract forbade that. Anyway, he became a pictorial Priestley and though everyone has a right to develop in his own way, they've only themselves to blame if it's a bad way, which leaves the door open for others. In this case, the documentarians. Producers of story-films, knowing their pictures didn't go down, thought it was because England (not themselves) was dull. They kept England off the screen—and the public found the only movies in which they met it were news-reel, natural-history, and "interest" (the old

English cinema). By that time, it had become so exotic that they swallowed it, hook, line, and sinker. Commercial studios have since woken up to this, and now give us chunks of actuality—real Rockies in *The Great Barrier*, real warships in *Our Fighting Navy*. But that is anticipating; a few years ago documentary was benefiting by the people's hunger for reality. That is why it matters so much more in effect than in achievement. There is a great hoot and cry about the directness of documentary. That is actually far from invariable. Documentary can be as much dictated by the needs or opinions of its control as anything else. In fact, by its nature, it must be either communist or fascist. But no one objects to that and by its nature limited, documentary is still as good, or can be till it gets poetic, as first-class journalism. For that reason, it has a high place, though its sponsors do it harm by suggesting that that is the Scone stone.

Nevertheless, for a young movement, our "reality cinema" has an imposing record. *Night Mail*, *Weather Forecast*, *Medieval Village*, *Housing Problems*, *Nutrition*, *Lobsters*, *Shipyard*, *The Face of Britain*, *Stone Horses*, *Air Mail*, *Six Thirty Collection*, *Causes of a Disturbance*, *Carriage*, *The Breast Stroke*, *The Crawl*, *The Earth-worm*, apart from the whole *Secrets of Nature* series, are only a few. The directors and technicians—Wright, Nagy, Spice, Taylor, Anstey, Elton, Rotha, Mary Field, Legge, Lye, Noble, Percy Smith, Bower, etc., are a body unequalled for diligence and devotion in any other branch of English film-work.

Forty years of cinema bring us indeed once again to the fact that British films are most to be admired for their shortness, photography, and informative qualities. These are to be found in the young and comparatively independent people's work. The reason—visually, the English can record but not create. Look at any French film, take such varied American productions as *The Plainsman* or *The Pharmacist*, feel the continuity of *Generation of Conquerors*, and remember that in cartoon, where movement is paramount, the English have never succeeded. Then you will see why the English excel only in information. With the best will in the world, and with high appreciation of documentary, I must suggest that why we excel in that is because in it, imagination is subsidiary. In films where it should count, such as expressing a man like Rhodes or exploiting a woman such as Gracie Fields, our movie-men are atrophied. They see in words, but can't think in movement; that has to be imagined.

That is why the only English cinema that counts is instructional—and, as always when opportunity offers, I would like to record gratitude to Bruce Woolfe's determination. It is also why I find all the facts and figures about British films irrelevant. They are very impressive and it takes a long time before they are also intelligible. But what seems to me quite likely to be as important, and is quite certainly ignored, is that

Englishmen don't make entertaining films simply because the race's imagination doesn't work visually. Till it does, there can't be a British cinema. As there never has been an imaginative one, as the corpus of British commercial production is something that has given neither pleasure to audiences nor profit to its makers, is a hovering heron, taking a bird's-eye view, too detached when he suggests it would only be sad if it were less silly? The British film has been a series of fits and starts; the fits have prevented it from starting, and I don't see how there can be future for something that has side-tracked its past. Unless something happens. I gather that that couldn't possibly be less making of profits, so it could only be a new way of looking at film. And I ask you, when has anyone in this country done that? Except the instructionalists, who did it first, thirty-odd years ago.

NOTES ON A FILM URGENCY

By OSWELL BLAKESTON

RECENTLY MANY SPLENDID suggestions have been made about the next phase of film production. But how can any of the good constructive ideas be put into practice, when it does not take an ex-communist to spot the obstructive monster lurking at the corner of the path? Perhaps the next phase ought to be a Len Lye gaiety. Well, it will be nice when we can go to church to learn the latest tune.

Maybe on the principle that any remark from the funny man gets a laugh, one or two of our film journalists have been running "social urgencies" in movies. Even at this simple game they miss truth. Who told the real economic significance of (say) Chaplin's last film? You remember how Chaplin, in early pieces, was the little chap who was knocked about by the great blonde woman? And now he himself becomes the protector of the sweet little innocent thing. Economic success and a changed outlook? What was "Modern Times" but every Wall Street magnet's dream of an unspoilt, unsophisticated cutie who needs help and protection? Beneath the superficial angle, revealing fact. Yet they missed it—all of them—even though many of the old Keystone cop faces appeared above bosses' faces.

When it comes to the far more important business than economics in films—the economics behind films, the film journalists make no pretence of coping. How could they, for they also are small cogs of the machine? It is not simply a question of admitting that Wardour Street may contain a number of Shady Transactions Limited. Threads run deep. It is a question of realising that the highly praised character-actor of the puffing and blowing school is a pawn in a game in which the images on the screen ultimately don't count.

A young man, wishing to "learn about the movies", could discover more by placing himself in an insurance office than by hanging about a studio floor or attending the cinema nightly. Here is, roughly, a glimpse of elaborate stakes: an insurance company will instruct a director, with a semi-artistic reputation, to do more or less as he likes. What the insurance company is after is not good films but a straw man. When the director has established himself as a benefactor of British film production, the insurance company can, under cover of his artistic prestige, buy up other companies.

Now what has happened from the insurance company's point of view? Some million pounds have been gambled on the straw man, and the return is the millions' more pounds worth of insurance which will be reached through the employees and effects of the new subsidiary companies. And what will happen from the point of view of what is seen upon the screen? Once the straw man has served his purpose, he will

be given no further lavish grants to obtain some sort of artistic effect. He must now either make everyday quickies or be dropped. Why should a combine take the trouble to make good films when there is no competition to speak of? Yes, this is well enough known to create an outcry were the combine openly organized. But an artistic dictatorship may seem helpful to those who do not realise that the dictator is given power only before and not after economic ends have been achieved.

Fantastic? Sir, one company is so eager to bring off the straw-man coup that it has been running two rival directors, in case one should ultimately prove the better artistic cover than the other. Think of the goal!—to control the whole British Industry and to control an immense and paying market in which to force the sale of insurance. And what can the cinema-goer do about it? Probably very little, but perhaps the best and the first guard is to be aware of what is really happening.

FRENCH FILMS

FEW DISCERNING FILMGOERS will have failed to observe that the majority of pictures from which they have derived unusual pleasure has for some months past been French. Fortunately there is no need to draw attention to Feyder's *La Kermesse Héroïque*; it draws attention to itself. But like all attractive ambassadors, it focuses interest in the place that it comes from, and, in concentrating, crystallises. The German cinema is shut to us; the Soviet is not generally open and, where it is, contains few of those surprises which make for creation instead of continuity (the bourgeois in Russian films still wears a bowler hat, whilst in life elsewhere he masquerades as a prolet, and usually a poet). The Viennese movie, where not nazi, is ossifying into a sentimentality, which I can only find significant because it is stereotyped; in this I may be wrong, but I am open to correction. When corrected, I shall merely say I am sick of the same actors and actresses (plus the same set of "discoveries" one never sees again) doing the same rôles in the manner of the last.

But the French film, that is different. And not only what might be called the special film, but the *in toto* effect of at any rate what has been seen in England. Nor, from what I have myself seen in Paris or had reported from France, do I believe that we are not in a position to judge. The French film, as exemplified by directors as patently dissimilar as Ophüls, Duvivier, Renoir, Feyder, and Guitry, has a cohesion. Each of these men, in their way, not only makes films, but contributes to, and thereby creates, a French cinema. It is in the hope of in some degree illustrating this that I append herewith a selection of French films lately visible.

PEPÉ LE MOKO (Paris Film Productions. Curzon. Directed by Jean Duvivier. Scenario, Jean Duvivier and Detective Ashelbe, from a novel by the latter. With Jean Gabin, Line Noro, Mireille Balin, Charpin, etc.)

IF YOU TAKE light of sun, tiger-slashed, and Southern heat, tiger-prowling; realise behind them the conflicting release and compression they cause: if you crystallise these in terms of a dark *quartier* overhung on a still sea and stone-shining town, which happens (inevitably) to be Algiers, with its hill-built Casbah, where criminals are safe—then you are ready to respond to a film which otherwise you will find brutal. And though there is no reason, no reason at all, why *Pépé* should not be found brutal, since it is, it would be a pity for you to think it so without having realised reasons. The Casbah is high up, narrow, tall-

buildinged. A crooks' catacomb. Like catacombs, a refuge at first, and then a trap. So Pepé finds it. So the police know he will find it. So his woman, Ines, also knows he will find it. And we may deduce the same from Gaby, someone else's woman, since she only comes to a place she couldn't face were she no longer exotic in it, in order to get him away. Apart from a new meaning to *l'amour*, which our French are always finding (and which their language allows them to—variations, instead of the same tune on different bells), you will find that in this film everyone knows precisely what they are doing. Or do it, almost deliberately unconsciously, to find out. They are adult. Pepé is adult and that is a feat, to take down the clock-face (*all gangsters are children*) and get at the works, instead of givin' 'em to us. Pepé is hemmed in, hampered in himself, so—unhappy. Police, who can't get him in Casbah, know that ; a ruse, to decoy him down, fails. The young deserter he was supposed to rescue returns and uses his last strength, which needs reinforcing from the gang who hold his arms, to shoot the decoyer, in one of the grimmest scenes of modern movie. Gaby, mistress of a wine-king, works the trick. Not for that, but for *nostalgie de Paris* . . . two of a kind. Pepé wants her, she wants Pepé. That, in a sense, is the joke. The tragedy happens, not because one wants an unwilling other, but because both answer the call. So a ship leaves, and a crook-king is handcuffed, but he manages, without escaping, to cheat the law, cutting his throat as he sees the girl wave, and though we think this ending is a concession, we don't know to what and that's where Duvivier wins, as he has done all along. I hope, too, that if I have told that at all naturally, there is no reason to add any more. Each department of the film lives up to the rest and even when there is an outrageously sentimental interlude of an old *vedette* singing to her own gramophone record, it marches. The director gets away with it, through effrontery sometimes and efficiency always.

LE ROMAN D'UN TRICHEUR. (Production, Serge Sandberg. Film Society. Direction and scenario, Sacha Guitry. Camera, Marcel Lucien. Sound, Paul du Berger. With Sacha Guitry, Jacqueline Deludac, Pauline Carton, Pierre Assy, Roger Duchesne, etc., etc.)

THE CHEAT'S LIFE begins well. As a punishment for stealing, he is deprived of mushrooms for supper. They happen to be poisoned, that night. His family dies. "They were honest and they were dead," he says, "I am alive because I stole." We prepare ourselves happily for logic at its gayest. The gaiety continues until the boy becomes a croupier at Monte Carlo. Dismissed, as from previous jobs, he becomes a card-sharper and is rich. He has cheated all along the line, and is successful. But one night, at the table, he meets a comrade who saved

his life in the war ; him he cannot cheat. He plays honestly and loses everything. He finishes up as a humble hand in a factory—but as he is a gambler, it is a card-factory. It will be seen that the story descends sharply after its opening. Graphlike, it shoots up now and again, but it cannot regain its original plane. Even so, artificial, affected, *tour de force* as it may be, its story alone challenges intelligence in a way unattempted by such generally acclaimed satires as *Theodora Goes Wild* or *My Man Godfrey*. But the story is only an egg which M. Guitry, as chef, is concerned to cook and dish up. It may be noted that he first wrote a commentary (on the basis of a novel previously published). Portions of the film were then shot, in synchronisation, to his own reading. Throughout, he is the only one that talks. At times he seems to be interpreting, at others to be commenting as a detached observer. At other times again, he discusses his life (which we see) with a waiter at the café where he is writing his memoirs. An old countess who takes the next table turns out to be one with whom he, as liftman, had many years back had an affaire, which we have seen on the screen. Sound and picture are shuttling to and fro, warp and woof, in a manner which gives the sound-film a fluidity we may almost have forgotten we ever expected to see. Further, this breaking up of the story with criticism, recapitulation, and shifting from past to present gives to the biographical film a form unattempted by the commercial cinema. In that connection it may be worth saying that in this a long period of years is covered more successfully than in any I have seen. *Le Roman d'un Tricheur* is neither deep in understanding nor broad in implication ; M. Guitry has also allowed virtuosity to carry him so far that at times he returns full circle to commercialism, and it has been beyond him to make casinos on the screen any less dull than usual. But he has produced a one-man show of a verve and freshness essentially French (it is interesting to observe that one man can make a film so one-man) and the formal and technical suggestions he casually throws out should startle other studios.

LA TENDRE ENNEMIE. (Eden Production. Film Society and Studio One. Directed by Max Ophuls. Photography by Eugene Schufftan and Lucien Colas. Art Direction, Jacques Gotko. Music, Albert Wolff. Sound, Antoine Archimbaud.)

SINCE THIS is a period piece, let pedigree be stated. It is adapted from the play by A. P. Antoine, performed in 1929 at the Théâtre Antoine. The director will be well known in England for *Liebelei*, and the cast includes notables from the Comédie Française, Opéra Comique, and Gaston Baty's Theatre. The point is, not that this bespeaks stately performances, but that the stateliness is in order. The tale unwinds, smoke-wise, from a betrothal party. You might say that, in process of

conniving at the convenient marriage of her daughter, a mother remembers her past. But the film is both more realistic and more fantastic. That past appears, and in the shape of her dead lover and her late husband, it appears as ghosts, who sit in the chandelier. It must be admitted that they sit there over-long; M. Schufftan might have varied his tricks. But it cannot fail to be appreciated that here we have psychological satire made manifest. Differently, but as waves in the same stream, these ghosts follow Guitry; they discuss Madame; their life with her is re-enacted—a life, be it marked, of which the other was in at least half-ignorance. The re-inaction is retrospective; where Guitry would comment contra-puntally, if the word may be pardoned, these ghosts re-live, so that we see by the absence of present passion not only the memory of past but the old urgency. The two ghosts are joined by a third, a lover earlier than either of them, who killed himself because Madame did not then follow her heart. It stands to reason, as respected in France, that Madame at this point (though unaware of the ghosts) insists on her daughter marrying where she will. Luckily it also stands to reason that when the party breaks up, the two ghosts asking their companion, can I see you home? are told, thanks, I live in (a cemetery in) another part of the town. *La Tendre Ennemie* is a gay film. That's why it's civilised, and though that may not be why it's serious as well as sentimental, it is worth realising as the former without dismissing it solely as the latter.

LA VIE EST À NOUS. (Produced and distributed by La Société de Diffusion de Propagande par le Film et par le Presse. Film Society.)

A PAMPHLET AND propaganda film, for appreciation of which it is essential to realise it was made in nine days, editing old shots with hastily done new scenes. By consequence rough, if that is the reverse of subtle, the film nevertheless has a place of its own. It marks an attempt to show French voters what the Front Populaire stands for. It does so with an effective, if journalistic, script, of a teacher holding forth on the wealth of the country; the children, dispersing, come up against facts—small shops shut for bankruptcy, evictions, the “two hundred families”, the Croix de Feu. Every method of screen-propaganda is utilized—interview, rhetoric, satire, sob-stuff. Much of it seems extemporised, some exaggerated. What matters, though, is that dozens of France's leading stars joined with technicians in voluntarily giving their services, to a film which they thought would help to save their country. What matters even more is the spirit behind this film, the spirit of which this is a sign—and a sign to which all who see their lives as instruments of liberty for others must answer, in proud paraphrase of our Iberian examples, “Let *these* pass.”

FILMS OF SPAIN

MUCH OF THE cinema's side-line claim to record history has once again been made out to be hokey. Football, boxing, racing, rackets (of all kinds), have been thought far more worthy of record than Spain's fight for freedom. The Government were quickly labelled Reds by that section of the press interested in their downfall. Nevertheless, there have been a few papers, and more than a few journalists, who have given us truth. The most the flaunting film can do—and therein is a comment on limited temporary self-preservation—is to give us only three short pictures¹ with any claim to directness and decency.

One, *Call to Arms*, was shown at the Besant Hall (with *Torn Shoes*, a sort of minor summary of most Soviet films, interesting mainly as a Russian picture of Nazi Germany). A short, marred by poor photography and olde-style Spanish music through which the American commentator was barely audible, *Call to Arms* was made last summer. It seemed strange to be seeing it this spring. But it showed Madrid ready, exciting our admiring aid by its cheerfulness as well as courage. Its pictures of the gradual relegation of women, in the early days, as organisation proceeded, to back-line work, raised a point we were discussing with Claude Cockburn shortly before the English Government refused him a visa. The film, further, gave an idea of how Madrid prepared to defend itself.

This was naturally more fully shown in Ivor Montagu's *Defence of Madrid*. Admittedly a film for the converted, it was made specially (and may I say before "Why aren't you in Madrid?" became a greeting). Montagu and his party went to Spain at the end of November, '36. They were afforded full facilities by the Government. They filmed all they could, and all they saw, including air-raids. They put the film together. Sub-titles admittedly create some of the emotion which opportunity for a planned scenario might have permitted the pictures to supply. But it is grim enough and straight enough (though *The Times* might think it subversive) and whilst we salute Potato Jones and runners of any kind of blockade, let us show this honest record wherever it may stir people to give money for those starving, dying, unable to give birth, and being bombed because of what they believe it evil to live under.

Pathé, the oldest news-reelers, stood out from other firms by a picture which was so stark, that it was cut before being released to the public. Even so, there was no doubt about its effect. The result of bombs of Franco, Mr. Garvin's "gentleman" (and does Mr. Garvin realise what service he is doing to the better side by using that word?) was recorded. That was all. And as I say, it was too much. The actual horrors of modern war are too dangerous to screen before audiences which may include pregnant women. Governments have to make

¹ *They Shall Not Pass* was shown too late for inclusion.

spurious recruiting films which actually gloss over the horrors of war. But Pathé deserve thanks for their sequence in which a shot of people, scurrying like ants, as they ran for shelter across a square, was followed by—silence, a row of coffins ; the very stillness summoning association of the wriggling movement soon to begin beneath those lids. * Then—life ; which meant, living seeking for the dead, those who were once living mangled, wounded drawn from débris, and homeless, wandering. The staring haggard faces in these films, the eye-sockets like ragged candles burnt out by the flaming eyes, the tension, the paper-thin skin on razor cheekbones, the wretchedness of the women, so well written of by Sylvia Townsend Warner elsewhere in this number—that is life, as forced on free men by Franco. And being free, they withstand it, neither because nor though it mean death. Because only of their own faith in what life should still be. It may seem to the uninitiated that England's final comment will be " Spain has proved she was backward by daring to look forward ". Let these films therefore be shown, and let those who pay for their seats go out at once afterwards and buy food for those who will soon be too weak to stand.

R. H.

REVIEWS OF RELEASES

FIRE OVER ENGLAND. (London Film Production. Leicester Square Theatre. Produced by Erich Pommer. Directed by William K. Howard. Photographed by James Wong Howe. Based on the Novel by A. E. W. Mason. Screen Play by Clemence Dane and Serge Nolbandert, with Flora Robson, Laurence Olivier, Morton Selten, etc.)

OR OLIVIER ALL over the place. He leaps, he loves, he fights, all with great fervour. And when he isn't gallivanting on, or off, galleons, he charms—O, how he charms ! One of his favourite places for charming is made to be wherever the Queen, who is Elizabeth, is about to appear. As he is boyish in an adult way, he charms the Queen too. And as Drake doesn't appear in the film, he is able to spread himself and the Queen is able to make the well-known suggestion about fire-ships at Tilbury. The Queen, played by Flora Robson, is so good that she makes one marvel anew at Korda ; here was a film originally planned to be about Elizabeth of England, here was the actress to do it. You'd think he couldn't go wrong,—and he did. He gives us an adolescent romance, in which the Queen need not have appeared. The script makes her a lay-figure ; Flora Robson makes her a living character. That is something of a feat, when one considers most of the dialogue is in Clemence-Danish, whilst many of the authentic remarks are made either to the wrong people or at the wrong time or place. The actress prevents it from mattering. But it's a pity ; with all due respect, Queen

Elizabeth really is more interesting than Mr. Olivier, or Mr. Korda. In fact, it speaks wonders for Flora Robson that she seems to take the film quite seriously. So seriously, indeed, that you feel this Elizabeth comes on the screen fresh from other, more authentic, matters, and will return to them, to reign. Here, she is only called on to be a Blessing In Disguise. This film will be called historical chiefly because when anyone in future is asked, "And why weren't there any British film-stars, daddy?", he will be able to answer, "Because we didn't know what to do with them."

CAMILLE. (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. Empire. Directed by George Cukor. From the play by Dumas fils. With Garbo, Robert Taylor.) THE *Sleeping Beauty* is a good story, and it can be done over and over again. *La Dame aux Camélias* is not such a good story, but still it could be, God knows it has been, done over and over again. It's a matter of approach, what you're looking for, which determines whether you find life in the old girl yet. She's a hardy annual, who can pop up year after year, only needing re-potting, re-wiring, possibly grafting with healthier stock, to suit the times. Cukor hasn't done any of these things. It is, I think, typical of his film that it is called *Camille*, which is neither the name of the heroine nor of the flower she wore. It is also typical of this film that it obscures both the flower's practical significance (that their proximity does not harm consumptives) and its symbolism (that it may be worn and admired, but wilts if it is touched.) Cukor's *Camille* is neither a re-assessment of Marguerite Gautier, nor a whole-hearted period throwback. Now and again, there's a kind of period glamour (when he remembers it—and that doesn't extend to the dialogue, which is flatter than in any previous Garbo piece), but on the whole, he seems chiefly concerned in getting over the worst patches of a tattered semi-tragedy with a sort of back-lit artificial-lilac lyricism. He also enables Garbo to give one of her best performances. But one day, we shall grow tired of performances whose sheer exquisiteness will only remind us, ultimately, of the irreality of their setting. Garbo now is a sufficiently fine actress to make us believe in her rôles; for that reason, and if only as box-office, it is bad policy to continue casting her in rôles that are not only unworthy of our respect but also irrelevant to the world we live in. Everyone should know by now what Garbo can do—what we want is to see her do it. And if she is ever allowed to, I hope the rest of the cast will not be allowed, or told, to overact as much as they were in *Camille*, the only Garbo film I shall see only twice.

ELEPHANT BOY. (London Film Production. Leicester Square. Directed by Robert Flaherty and Zoltan Korda. Photographed by Osmond Borrodaile. From Kipling's *Toomai of the Elephants*. With Sabu, Kala Nag, etc.)

THERE'S NO DOUBT we are getting sophisticated. When you think of

those to whom that word is applied (such as Joan Crawford and Myrna Loy) it seems a sad thing to be, so perhaps I do better to call it, spoilt. Whichever it is, we certainly are. This, not so many years ago, would have been one of the thrills of the cinema; now it's no great shakes—not even the elephant dance. That should be the climax of the picture, but I could do better as a back-leg in a pantomime every time. The Griffith Brothers do, with Pogo, and I can only hope they were on tour when this film was put together. I forget how many months were spent in India, and how many feet taken, for this picture. They don't have the effect we might hope, for we really feel we have seen most of this kind of thing before. *Man of Aran* killed Flaherty for me. As for Zoltan Korda, his assistant director on this, I never found he came to life. It's really too late in the day, after *Chang*, to offer us a stampede of elephants as climax. You may notice that I have mentioned "climax" before. That is because I am still looking for one. Kipling's *Toomai of the Elephants* had its own narrative form. This film seems to have been frightened of using that or of finding one for itself. It displays the usual Denham debility—scenario-weakness. It displays a number of other things, too, including elephants. But it does not show any ability to translate either stirringly or simply to the screen a story which is in essentials both those things. As to the setting, one can see those better in documentaries or *Secrets of Nature*. Too bad, Toomai.

THE GOOD EARTH. (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. Palace. Produced by Irving Thalberg. Directed by Sidney Franklin. Photographed by Karl Freund. From the book by Pearl Buck. With Luise Rainer, Paul Muni, Tilly Losch, etc., etc.)

A FURTHER EXAMPLE of Hollywood's increasingly respectful treatment of well-known stories (a point on which, incidentally, England has not yet caught up). Not long ago it would have been impossible for so sensible a treatment of Pearl Buck's book to have come from Californian studios. We'd have had Charlie Chan *in excelsis*, Mr. Wu and perhaps Clara Bow, Tilly Losch's part would have been made the chief rôle, and the sets would have been as bad as in *The Lost Horizon*. As it is, all we have to do is to forget we ever saw a Chinese film, let alone *Storm Over Asia*, and admit that Luise Rainer gives a much better imitation of a European being a Chinese than does Paul Muni of being an actor; she wears much more make-up than he does, and she has hardly any dialogue, but even so, she's able to give much the same kind of performance as usual. You don't, of course, get China when you film a book about China, not by a Chinese. What you get is a visualization of the book. This is remarkably faithful, with grand camera-work. And if the very elaborateness of the cinematography shows up the conventionality of the tale, let it be remarked that there is proof of even the commercial cinema's advance in the shot of two locusts fighting for supremacy on a

blade of corn. There are lots of locusts in the film, and their presence is not always convincing ; but these two have it over, not only the rest, but also over the human players. They supply almost the only genuine drama in the picture, and therefore it was almost a mistake to have them.

HORTOBAGY. (Hoellering Film, Budapest. Film Society. Directed by Georg Michael Hoellering. Photographed by Laszlo Schaeffer. Music by Laszlo Jajtha. With Imre Kovacs, Istvan Kanyasi, Margit Szincsak, Mihaly Nagy, etc.)

ONE OF THOSE rare films which are an experience to see, this picture also provides, with *The Good Earth*, an object-lesson. For over a thousand years, Hungarians have lived on the horse-breeding plains which the film takes as its setting. During the last century, agriculture has encroached on them and now even the last of the plains has been partially ploughed. *Hortobagy*, without setting out to be a documentary record of this vanishing civilisation, strongly and sweetly persuades us of the lives of these people, and of their horses, which both are the life of the plains. The difference between this and *The Good Earth* is not that the director spent eighteen months living with the peasants (Flaherty does that, too), nor that such story as there is, is acted by them. *Ernte* was filmed on Hungarian plains ; it remained artificial in that it was a play acted without stage restrictions. *The Good Earth*, starting as a book, is also a screen-play. It is big and slow and impressive ; were it smaller and speedier, I think we might be less impressed. For the original impulse of the book has not been caught and re-cast. The film has photographed the book. *Hortobagy* satisfies where *The Good Earth* does not, or ultimately will not, because the camera is used not simply to record a performance, but to itself assist in the actual creation of the expression of what in both films is the same, earth. That is the difference between camera-work and photography, and that itself is the difference between cinema as we fight for it and cinema as we see it nine times out of ten. The fact that one of those nine times may be impressive, even moving, should not blind us to the bigger fact that the tenth time is more so.

WINTERSET. (Radio. Regal. A Pandro S. Berman Production. Directed by Alfred Santeil. Screen Play by Anthony Veiller, from the play by Maxwell Anderson, as produced by Guthrie McClintie. With Margo, Burgess Meredith, Edouardo Ciannelli, Edward Ellis, Maurice Moscovitch, etc., etc.)

A YOUNG MAN obsessed with vengeance on those who had wrongly condemned his father for a fatal hold-up ; a judge gone out of his mind through having sentenced an innocent man ; remorseful gangsters all variously giving themselves away over a crime for which they had not

yet been found guilty ; ' a young sister, of the lily-in-mud species, and various quaint characters thrown in for atmosphere—I confess this film thudded against most of my blind spots simultaneously. It may be rich in drama ; indeed, every inch of the film, every inflection and pose of the film shrieks out, " This is what has always been meant by drama ". But I found its pseudo-poetry, masquerading as prose, smeared it with the second-rate. I don't think films should be directed " after the stage production ", and it seemed to me that authors who attempt this kind of thing need an " O " before their name. O'Neil, O'Casey can get away with it—but, No, Anderson.

THE LOST HORIZON. (Columbia. Tivoli. Directed by Frank Capra. Screen Play by Robert Riskin, from the novel by James Hilton. Photography by Joseph Walker, Aerial Photography by Elmer Dyer. With Ronald Colman, Margo, Edward Everett Horton, H. B. Warner, Sam Jaffe, the Hall Johnson Choir, etc.)

A PICTURE WHICH might have been puerile and pretentious is saved by the fact that you can look at it whichever way you like. Some, no doubt, will find the fantasy just their ticket. Others will see it as an adventure film, only marred by people getting a bit light-headed when they reach the heights. For myself, it is the perfect surrealist film. In fact, I'm prepared to believe I didn't see it, because this is what I saw : Ronald Colman, about to become Foreign Secretary, kidnapped at the suggestion of a girl living in a lamasery in Tibet. She wears the kind of clothes you associate with stars in their off moments and when Colman arrives up a windswept icy pass, she waves from the wistaria-covered balcony, and that is part of the lamasery. So is a swimming (or super-lily ?) pool, so is an Astoria-Odeon façade, so is a quite remarkably fake-looking collection of *objets d'art*. This is a magic monastery, where everyone is happy, following the golden rule of moderation. There are labourers, but we don't have much truck with them. There is Edward Everett Horton, too,—in a bowler hat, trying to be both Laurel and Hardy at once. There is H. B. Warner, like a don in fancy dress. There is Margo, who we are told arrived there in 1888 and is liable to become a wrinkled old woman if she goes into the outer world. There is, finally, a one-legged Belgian priest, who looks as if he should be selling matches, but recites pretty thoughts instead. He is two hundred years old, and he is glad to meet Colman, because he knows the loonery will be safe in his hands. Colman writes books, you see, and the girl has read them. That's why she thought he would be a good person to have around. Not for what you think, but because he has Seen the Light, or something. It should be said that this Tibetan *Metropolis* is going to be the last haven of civilisation during the coming world-destruction. Who'll survive and how they'll get over them mountains is not indicated. Colman himself

has an awful time getting there. That's not so much lack of faith as overtime by the wind-machine.

Before this, there's been quite a bit about revolution in China, and lots of talk about Life and Love everywhere. There are also avalanches, pigeons, several deaths—in fact almost everything but the Marx brothers. They *may* have been there, as extras. For this is the funniest film I've seen in years. It's probably Capra's answer to Chaplin, though what the question can have been, I don't know. And I'm still not sure if I saw it. But it lasted two and a half hours, and even then we didn't see all of it that was made.

THE PLAINSMAN. (Paramount. Plaza. Directed by Cecil B. de Mille. With Gary Cooper, Jean Arthur, James Ellison, etc.)

I LIKED THIS film ; my eye was treated to vivid and vital action in a succession of economic scenes, my brain was not unduly insulted. I am grateful. I hope, therefore, I may be permitted to point out that I shall never understand why producers, directors, and continuity-girls allow so many dramas to be ruined in their effect by points that do not escape those of us engaged in less harassing business than film-making. In *Camille*, for instance, we are asked to believe that Marguerite Gautier, playing a piano on the first floor of a well-built house, would hear a bell which, in those days, rang in the basement. This despite the fact that the hooves of the horses carrying the ringer are inaudible. We are also asked to believe that a woman of her experience would not have known how to deal with the quite simple situation of one man arriving while she was entertaining another. It may also be noticed that in this film much trouble would have been averted had people not had the habit of walking into rooms without giving that notice of their approach which is, perhaps, more incumbent on intimates than on anyone else. Similarly, how are we to believe, in *Winterset*, in a Socialist who leaves "subversive" documents in a car, unattended ? Similarly at *The Plainsman*, I found much trouble would have been averted, and therefore that the drama would have been heightened, had Jean Arthur in the last scenes in the bar behaved with a little of the sense with which one felt Jean Arthur would. One doesn't ask Desdemona not to drop her handkerchief, but one does ask that it shall be in character when she does, and, further, that if we are to believe in the people on the screen, they shall be not very much less like human beings than we who go to see them. It becomes foolish when we know someone does that, in order that the director can let something else happen. We've already got to the point when we don't believe in screen shipments of tobacco or tools any more ; we know they are drugs or rifles. It didn't matter in *The Plainsman*, because that in a sense is the old original, but when I met the same gag in *The Secret of Stamboul*, the thrill wasn't what the director had fondly hoped, but simply because

I'd been right in my guess. That's another reason why there should never be a ring at the door just after a man says he won't see someone ; we know the young woman will be on the mat. We can't help knowing.

These remarks are not particularly pertinent to *The Plainsman*. They could have prefaced *Camille*, *After the Thin Man*, any British, any Viennese, film. But they can come in on *The Plainsman*, because they were in small part prompted, and there isn't so much else to say of it. De Mille, Gary Cooper—you know what you're going to get. You get it. A bit more than before. It's great fun. No use thinking it's a pity the Indians didn't have a moving picture industry to express their point of view about "pioneers". They were the haves, against the have-nots. The have-nots, as we know, win, and *The Plainsman* belongs to the days when intervention was thought no more shameful than the results of non-intervention to-day. It's a stirring super-lifesize Western, which says what it has to say satisfactorily and only leaves one to suggest that Gary Cooper might with profit pay as much attention to his camera-crew as Garbo has always done to hers.

O.H.M.S. (Gaumont-British Corporation. Directed by Raoul Walsh. Photography by Roy Kellino. Art Director, E. Metzner. With Wallace Ford, John Miles, Anna Lee, Frank Cellier.)

JUST TO SHOW there's no hard feeling about giving this title to a purely military film, the synopsis opens with "Jimmy Tracy, tough young New Yorker, becomes involved in a gambling house brawl". He joins the Army to see the world (British, of course, other armies don't ; they just go to Abyssinia or revolt in Spain, and that's only hell) and one of the parts of the world he sees is China, a country whose inhabitants are so free with their fire-crackers that masses of military, tanks, and bombers, have apparently to go out, to destroy what look like left-over *Painted Veil* sets, in order that long-chinned young Englishwomen in tennis-frocks shall still be able to talk their own particular *Tatler*-Tooting dialect wherever it is, fortunately, not understood. And so peace came to Eden.

We've heard it before, of course ; in different terms and in much the same. But this bit of disguised Duff-Coopery, made with "the assistance of all ranks of the Army, who, by permission of the Army Council, co-operated in the making" of the picture, is the first film of potent overt propaganda to reach our screens. It may be the more large-scale because it allows wise-crackers to say, "And the sum total is, a murderer gets on fine in the Army." That's the sophistication, which even Sam, signing on from St. Helens, is supposed to have. What he isn't supposed to have is money in his pocket or food in his stomach. True, he has neither when he joins t'Army. That's why he does. But it gets no one any further to hide the fact that, once signed on, the papers may say

"Tommy" (who's a myth) is to have steel wardrobes, when you know you've got them and aren't allowed to use them; or that regulations fix what kind of mufti you wear, thereby making it a uniform; that certain public houses serve other Services, but not Their Majesties' Army; and that, no one has yet shown how much food isn't eaten in the Army, because the cooks can't cook it in time. *O.H.M.S.* doesn't give any of this, and it is exactly for that reason that, as a bit of Government propaganda, it isn't dangerous. For if you can imagine a British film director as "constitutional" as Stanley the First, you will realize how terrifying talkies could be.

OUR FIGHTING NAVY. (Herbert Wilcox Production. Directed by Norman Walker. From a story by Bartimeus. With Robert Douglas, H. B. Warner, Richard Cromwell, etc.)

THIS ISN'T TERRIFYING at all. It's rather like *O-Kay for Sound*. The patriotism is so intense that no one believes it and all the actors have to do is try to make out they do. That means, be clean-shaved and keep a stiff upper lip. All of which Robert Douglas does in a way worthy of better things. Richard Cromwell, appearing in a totally irrelevant part, shows he's no more at home in the British Navy than, in *Bengal Lancer*, he was in the British Army. Though that is saying a good deal, it is to be hoped he will never be called upon to join the American Air Force; he would never get over hearing his own accent all round him. For the rest, all that need be recorded of this film is that a be-minked post-abdication audience who had paid upwards of three guineas for their seats (in aid of St. George's Hospital) still despite the official presence of the Duke and Duchess of Kent, found the heroics slightly hysteric. In fact, royalty or no royalty, they laffed.

R. H.

WE FROM KRONSTADT. (Moscow Studios Mosfilm. Film Society. Directed by E. Dzigan. Scenario, Vsevolod Vishnevsky. Camera, N. Naumov-Strazh and Y. Berliner. Sound Recordist, P. Pavlov. With Bushuev, Zaichikov, Raisa Esipova, Ivakin, and citizens of the Kronstadt commune.)

ON PAPER THE story of this film would seem unwieldy, and no outline of the plot would give any idea of its scale, which is epic. I will only say that the year is 1919, when Red marines and soldiers are defending Kronstadt, headquarters of the Soviet fleet, from attacks by the Whites. There are many characters and several plots. The Whites remain vague, they are evil and enemy, which each of the Reds is individualized and has his own story. The film brilliantly first shreds each of the Reds

from the mass and then weaves them into the whole. But what matters is not that the film, made of so many elements, should be so easy to follow. It is simply that it depicts one thing—faith. Admittedly it shows it in simple terms. But behind the actions of these sailors, soldiers, marines and the officer's wife, all fighting, there is faith. Behind the fighting there is the knowledge that it is, if not a bad thing, certainly not a glorious one that it has to be done; but it is the only way for that faith to be preserved, to bear fruit later. *We From Kronstadt*, technically exciting and thematically inspiring, is a picture whose nobility places it on a level with the heroic works of the silent Soviet cinema, and it is encouraging that, though in England it has only been seen by members of the Film Society, it has already been shown with success in the United States and in France.

SHORT FILMS

THE GAP. (Gaumont-British Instructional. Gaumont Haymarket. Directed by Donald Carter, Photographed by George Pocknall. Technical Adviser, Lieut.-Col. J. K. Dunlop, Secretary of the Joint Publicity Committee, Territorial Association. With the 51st, 52nd, 53rd, 54th A.A. Brigades R.A. (Gunnery), 26th and 27th A.A. Battalions R.E. (Searchlights), 1st A.A. Divisional Signals (Signallers) and Squadrons 32, 48, 2, and 102, R.A.F. (Fighter, Reconnaissance, Army Co-operation and Bomber).)

PRODUCED WITH THE co-operation of the Army Council and the Air Council, this is the official air-defence film of Great Britain. "In every respect based upon the views of the authorities responsible for the security and safety of Great Britain," it shows how civilian observers, ground defence corps, and airmen co-operate in an air-raid. It is highly interesting to see a replica of the Air Defence Centre Control Room, made with the assistance of Col. Wockens of the 1st Anti-aircraft Division (Signals). But it is natural that a film made as "a reply to criticisms of Britain's air defence measures", would not show up the weaknesses; responsibility is shifted to the population; the "gap" is caused by lack of volunteers for ground-defence. That's why the raiders get in, that's why women and children are killed. It's our fault. Fingers point, a gentlemanly accent says "You"; *The Gap* is a recruiting film, and it can't be expected that it would show just those means of defence which would be effective.

MY SONG GOES FORTH. (Ambassador Film. Studio One. Produced by Joseph Best. With Paul Robeson.)

IT SHOULD BE made clear that Paul Robeson does not act in this film. In fact, he does not appear "in" it at all, but only at beginning and end

as prologue and epilogue. But that doesn't mean that the film's a catchpenny. It shows Africa—what the white man has done and what has happened to the native—and Robeson was so impressed with it that he lent it, as you might say, the benefit of his name. When the song has gone forth, we see Johannesburg; its growth is traced. From the Rand to the Vaal River—from gold to diamonds. Finally, to Natal and Durban. "From what the white man has achieved we pass to what he has done for the native. He has put him to work." But the native doesn't get the same wages, and the houses he is given to live in are not like those of the whites—the film makes no contrasts, it places things side by side; the matter of housing is dealt with in the same way. We are left to draw our own conclusions. Lovedale College is seen, and the problem of the "poor whites" is touched on. Despite the Tauberian title, *My Song Goes Forth* is an instructive and thoughtful film and whatever one may think of the level of the lyric, one can understand why Robeson agreed to sing the song.

MANY HARVESTS. (Produced by Publicity Films, for Cadbury Brothers, Ltd., Piccadilly.)

CADBURY'S MADE THEIR first advertising film in 1913. *Many Harvests* is the title given to their latest programme, which includes four short pictures. *Fascinating Facts* aims at stunning you with statistics. Twenty-four million gallons of milk a year are used by Cadbury's, the tin required to pack their annual output would cover the sides of the *Queen Mary* ten times. By such facts we are to be impressed by the vastness of the Bournville business. *Country Fare* is more interesting. It shows how Cadbury's demand for butter, eggs, milk gives farmers a market, which encourages them to expand in this direction. Doing this, it also shows the change wrought in farming by modern conditions. It was directed by Evelyn Spice, maker of *Weather Forecast*. The third film, *Workaday*, by Ralph Smart, is described as "remarkable among factory films because the worker, not the machine, is the star". But though employ es are seen both at work and at play, the film does not really show much of their lives. It's a boost for Bournville, where it's all one happy family. It may be, but we would agree more readily if the workers were allowed to speak for themselves, if one were told something of hours and wages, and something of the rents of the villas shown. Similarly with *Plantation People*. Directed by A. R. Taylor (Bournville film executive), this picture sets out to show life in Trinidad; the gathering of cocoa-beans and sugar-cane are shown in Technicolor, photographed by Ray Rennahan (who did *Becky Sharp* and *Trail of the Lonesome Pine*). Dark leaves and brown bodies don't give much chance for colour-effects at present within reach, and if we are socially-minded we are left unsatisfied as to the thoughts of the people.

The facts we get aren't about housing, wages, hours ; they're about sales, and shipments. These are films made by a business on the up and up under present conditions. And they are shown in institutes, clubs, women's meetings up and down the country. That's the point.

THE DROTTHOLM THEATRE. (Production, Svensk Film-industri Film Society. Directed by Agne Beijer. Photographed by Gustaf Boge.)

DEPENDING FOR INTEREST entirely on its subject, this Swedish short is a documentary film of a Royal theatre built in 1766. It is still intact, together with its original scenery and stage-machinery, which the film shows in action.

MOUNT EVEREST EXPEDITION OF 1936. (Ciné-Kodak Photographed by Frank Smythe. Privately viewed, Kodak House, Kingsway.)

THERE HAVE BEEN several films of Mt. Everest expeditions and they are necessarily much the same. We have become familiar with the start from Darjeeling, the Tibetan monastery, the last camp, the plume from the peak, and since these do not vary, we have become a little bored. Cinema lets us see what previously only those who took part would have seen. We cash-in on the spectacle without sharing the peculiar delight of the climbers to whom it is a reward. But Mr. Smythe has brought back with him a record, partly in colour, and now for the first time we see the tints of a Tibetan dawn, Everest itself in colour, and lovely landscapes of lilac, sand, and palest blue—all recorded, on Kodachrome, with a delicacy as yet unattained by other systems. No doubt we shall get familiar even with Everest in colour. But now we see it for the first time, and it is worth commenting on the tones.

THE EQUATION X PLUS X EQUALS NOUGHT. (Notation by Robert Fairthorne. Animation by Brian Salt. Film Society.)

I AM TOLD that "the basic element of the diagram is a disc, of variable radius, rotating at constant speed. From the perimeter of this disc unrolls a string, whose length is therefore equal to the integral of the radius with respect to the diameter." All I can say is, the film goes on and on (not for long, only four minutes, but kind of goofily while it does) and I am delighted it should ; it must be as pleasant to those who understand it as *Tale of Two Cities* is to Dickens-dotards. I'm neither, so I can only fulfil my function by reminding intending show-ers that everything is made simple because "throughout a white disc represents a negative quantity and a black disc a positive". I repeat, I am glad it

goes on and on, and add that it also goes round and round, since copies are available on 35, 16, and 9·5 mm. stock.

ON THE WAY TO WORK. (Strand Film. The Film Society.
Directed by Edgar Anstey. Photography by George Noble.)

NOT AS MIGHT be thought, an *avant-garde* study of feet pressing pavements on the way to offices, Anstey's new film is a picture of the reconditioning camps (about which we shall shortly print an article) and instructional centres whither men from depressed areas are sent to be trained and physically re-fitted for new jobs. It was made for the Ministry of Labour, and something of the official view (a hopeful cheeriness resultant from well-meant endeavour) was bound to be present. But the faces speak for themselves. Even more does what one can only describe as the lostness of the men. The picture opens with a number of unemployed being asked if they are willing to leave their homes, and learn a new trade ; that is what they are faced with—an old trade no use, an uprooting, a beginning again in another district. They are willing ; they have to be. But they are as lost as the lads, debilitated through unemployment, arriving at camps to be made strong again for work—if there is any. On the one hand, “ boom year ” and increase in parliamentary salaries. On the other, this film ; of which it is sufficient to say that it is in direct line with *Housing Problems* and *Nutrition*, two other social films, previously reviewed in these pages.

R. H.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

HISTORY

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF ROBERT DEVEREUX, EARL OF ESSEX. G. B. HARRISON. Cassell. 15s.

DR. HARRISON'S EXCELLENT biography is matter-of-fact and detailed. The only criticism that can be made of his treatment of his subject is, that there is little revelation of Essex's mental life, and of the extent to which he was directed by his thought. It is difficult to believe that the Essex revealed in these pages could have shown Bacon sympathy and understanding, and if there is evidence available, it would have been interesting to know more about his life before he went to Court.

After reading Dr. Harrison's account of Essex's life, it is surprising to find that as late as 1600, after his Irish expedition, he was still regarded with admiration by large numbers of his countrymen. "Yet one man seemed to stand out conspicuous as a symbol of true nobility, the coming saviour of his country, perhaps even, if some hopes were fulfilled, their next king—Essex." Those who still look upon Essex as a romantic figure will find little support for their impression in this book. Essex had a spectacular rise and an ignominious fall, but throughout his adult life weakness of purpose, vanity, and lack of self-knowledge were his characteristics, and an uncritical desire for power for its own sake his chief motive.

Francis Bacon, whose relations with Essex are of great interest, affords a useful contrast. Dr. Harrison shows that Bacon saw Essex's fatal misreading of the queen's character and the manœuvring which made him at length appear a rival power in the State to the queen.

The life of Essex is shown before a detailed background, and there is a clear account of the working of Elizabeth's government, and of the trials she imposed upon ministers and favourites. The narratives of the Irish expedition, so boastfully planned and incompetently carried out, of the futile rising and the trial, are particularly interesting.

R. F. F. SUMMERS.

ROBESPIERRE, FIRST MODERN DICTATOR. By RALPH KORNGOLD. Macmillan. 16s.

THE FIRST FRENCH Revolution is not generally studied in England and is usually misunderstood. It is strange, because it was a revolt, not of the proletariat, but of the middle classes, and up to the dictatorship of Napoleon, many English were in favour of it. Mr. Korngold has written a popular biography of Robespierre that is a good introduction, although he emphasises the sensational aspects at the expense of

Robespierre's solid achievements, and has an odd way of apologising for facts, that need no defence. His title is particularly misleading. Robespierre was never a dictator. He rejected every suggestion of a body-guard, and might have seized supreme power, altered the history of Europe, and saved his own life, had he been willing, one day even before his death, to appeal to force.

The statesman is formed by his childhood. This was particularly true of Robespierre, who owed his interest in educational reform and family welfare to his unhappy schooldays—a boarder with little pocket-money and few friends—at Louis le Grand, in Paris. His legal and other studies completed, he returned to his native town, Arras, where one of his first cases attracted attention throughout France: the defence of the scientist, de Vissery, who had set up a lightning rod on his house, and had been ordered by his ignorant neighbours to remove it, as a public danger. This conflict between old and new ideas must have been ideal training for later days in the Assembly. He also defended an English-woman there, who had been imprisoned for debt.

Conditions in his province were bad. It was said that the French peasant of that time was taxed eighty-one francs out of every hundred francs earned. Robespierre travelled about the neighbourhood, talked, wrote, observed. When the States General were announced, a report that he had written upon the province of Artois was published, in which he attacked the conditions under which the people existed. Elected a delegate as a result, he returned to Paris aged not quite thirty-one. He was only thirty-six when he died. In the intervening years, he was more responsible perhaps than any other Frenchman, in forming that revolutionary spirit of freedom and equality that has existed, sometimes openly, sometimes "underground", but always continuously, from 1789 until the present day.

He was strangely modern. Coming from the middle classes, pedantic in his tastes, aloof in his manner, he yet believed more than any other member of the Assembly, Marat apart, in the power of the proletariat. For him, it was the people who were right; if mistakes were made, it was because they were wrongly advised. He was not jealous of his learning. At a time when merely to read or write were still the privileges of the upper and middle classes, he insisted upon universal education, saying in his famous Declaration of the Rights of Men, "Society ought to encourage with all its might the progress of public intelligence, and bring education within the reach of every citizen."

For six years he left others to dispute and intrigue, while he concentrated upon the only idea that mattered to him, the freedom of the people. As long as he could, he opposed war, he wished the Negroes in the French colonies to be admitted to the same rights as white citizens. Gradually as chaos increased, as this man or the other was unable to shake himself free from the environment of his class, or yielded to the

prevalent corruption of the age, the people whom Robespierre trusted looked to him for order. For the first years, at any rate, he was just, merciful, and tolerant. He fought to the end, for example, against religious persecution and had a twentieth-century sense of the value of art as propaganda, particularly in the theatre and in the outdoor processions organized chiefly by the painter, David. Then the Revolution, with its dispossessed classes intriguing with minority factions, and the constant warfare, grew beyond any man's control. He used his power to condemn his enemies to death, but from that same moment, weakened his own hold over the Assembly. It should, however, be remembered that he refused to use force to defend himself.

A peaceful Revolution is a contradiction in terms. By modern standards, the first French Revolution was relatively humane. It is estimated that twenty thousand persons perished during six years, as against seventy thousand in three months during and after the Commune in 1871. How many have perished in these supposedly more civilised times in the cold persecution of European concentration camps or have been shot down in the past few months in Spain?

Historians have said, and Mr. Korngold repeats the statement, that Robespierre was aloof and had no real contact with humanity. Why, in that case, was he so popular, that people stood for hours to gain admission to hear his speeches; why did his fellow members at the Jacobin club so frequently protest their willingness to die with him? We are still, it seems, even impartial historians, too much swayed by what his enemies wrote, after his death. No doubt it was to the advantage of subsequent rulers of France to obscure a man who believed that power belonged to the people, and that officials were merely their servants, to be punished ruthlessly for errors or corruption. It has to be proved to a modern world that he was as indifferent to people as is stated.

Mr. Korngold makes one interesting suggestion for the sudden abandonment of all attempts to save Danton. There are a good bibliography for those who wish to extend their study further and several illustrations. It seems a pity, however, that a book obviously intended for popular appeal, should be priced so expensively. There are other biographies available, more suited to the student of history.

BRYHER.

THE PARIS COMMUNE OF 1871. By FRANK JELLINEK. Gollancz. 8s. 6d.

FEW ACCOUNTS OF the Commune, historical or otherwise, exist in English. Most children have heard of the Franco-Prussian war, few adults even know of the heroic defence of the Paris barricades by a handful of badly armed men. It has been estimated that one hundred and twenty thousand people were killed, imprisoned, or deported during the summer of 1871. Few of these died during the actual fighting,

thousands were murdered afterwards or were arrested, often on the evidence merely of an anonymous letter. The story so resembles certain events of the past few years, that one imagines one is reading contemporary newspaper accounts of the sufferings of certain German, Austrian, and Italian families.

Mr. Jellinek must know the events of the Commune better than many people know their own lives. His study is thoroughly documented, and there is a valuable bibliography for the student. The last chapters, in particular, sweep along with the enthusiasm of those early days when Paris defied the reactionary forces, not of France only, but of Europe.

One point of criticism might be, that a short summary of the events described could have been included. There is now such widespread interest in the Commune, that it is doubtful if many of the readers will be used to historical study. Unless they know something of the conditions of the time, they may find the first chapters difficult. Mr. Jellinek was right not to popularize his subject, but a brief account of facts, without details, as preface to each chapter, would have helped many not to lose themselves in the by-ways of the narrative.

We suggest that any who find history dull, should begin at chapter four, read onwards, and come back to the causes of the revolution afterwards, by which time they will probably want to read the whole book over again. It is a grim comment on the spirit of the nineteenth century that so little was done abroad, to rescue the victims of reactionary revenge, though it is said that when a ship with many of those sentenced to be deported in cages on board, touched an Australian port, the population took food to them, which was refused by the French authorities. Tourist excursions to the ruined barricades are even said to have been arranged, principally for British travellers.

The narrative is impartial and no reader need be frightened away, whatever may be his own political convictions.

BRYHER.

POLITICS

DEFENCE OF MADRID. By GEOFFREY COX. Gollancz. 2s. 6d.

GEOFFREY COX WAS the *News-Chronicle* correspondent in Madrid from October to December, 1936, the fateful months in which Franco's advance looked irresistible and it appeared inconceivable to the outside world that the city would hold out till Christmas. It was not in his hands at Christmas, and Mr. Cox's straightforward and simple account of its defence in the months when its fate was trembling in the balance tells us the reasons why. One of them, of course, was the International Brigade.

"The few people who were about lined the roadway, shouting almost hysterically, 'Salud! Salud!' holding up their fists clenched in salute, or clapping vigorously.

"The troops in reply held up their fists and copied the call of 'Salud!' We did not know who they were. The barman turned to me saying, 'The *Rusos* have come. The *Rusos* have come.'

"But when I heard a clipped Prussian voice shout an order in German, followed by other shouts in French and Italian, I knew they were not Russians.

"The International column of Anti-Fascists had arrived in Madrid. We were watching the First Brigade of what was to develop into the most truly international army the world has seen since the Crusades."

Mr. Cox holds the balance fairly between the Spaniards and the International Brigade who came to their help.

"How pleasant it would be to be able to say simply: 'The International Column was responsible for Madrid's magnificent defence.' But reality is seldom clear cut like this. The truth is that the masses would probably have fought bitterly and bloodily, even if the Column had not come. The fighting determination of the people of the capital was a factor which all but a few experienced observers on the spot tended to under-estimate. In paying the honour which is undoubtedly due to the International Column one must not forget the supreme, if chaotic and unruly, efforts of the Spanish People's Army.

"But the International Column definitely tipped the balance the other way in these early struggles of November. They were the trained, mobile force who met the Moors and held up their smashing rush forward in the open grounds of the Casa del Campo. They were able to check the attacks towards the Escorial Road. They provided the shock troops for the day and night fighting in the University City. In truth they gave the example and lead which the Spaniards followed."

I find I have quoted a good deal more than I have written. But this is not a book on which I have a great deal to say, though there is a great deal more that I should like to quote. There are still those who regard the war of the fascists upon the Spanish people as "having nothing to do with us" and in the interests of so-called non-intervention are willing to see Madrid follow the fate of Addis Ababa. It is improbable that there will be many persons of this mentality who will risk jeopardizing their impartiality by reading Mr. Cox's story, for it might recall to them the fact that in this war there is only one essential atrocity, and that is that it was started.

ERIC MOSBACHER.

WE AREN'T SO DUMB. By CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS. Longmans. 6s.

MR. HOLLIS'S BOOKS about international affairs are supposed to be enlightening, but I find them exactly the reverse. Like *Foreigners Aren't Fools*, *We Aren't So Dumb* is a tour of the ideological fronts. But Mr. Hollis is, if I may say so, an assiduous collector of froth rather than a student of wave mechanics, with the result that when he embarks upon his patient and painstaking voyages upon the troubled ocean of international politics he collects a vast amount of surface information but never plunges below the surface. The result is that though his work has been acclaimed as "brilliant", and "entertaining and

stimulating ", and though it has been said that it " should be eagerly read ", I am myself of the opposite opinion, and hold that work of this kind tends to popular mystification and puzzlement rather than to enlightenment.

ERIC MOSBACHER.

I FOUND NO PEACE. By WEBB MILLER. Simon and Schuster. \$3.
I FOUND NO PEACE. By WEBB MILLER. Gollancz. 12s. 6d.

THE AUTHOR OF this book is a star American reporter. If, as his title states, he has failed to find peace, that is the price which he has had to pay for his position. His history is another case of the determined human being choosing a career which demands the characteristics he most obviously lacks. By his very reluctance he is the more capable of making the most of his opportunities ; and by his success he justifies himself in his own eyes. An example is his confession that he often still walks around for some time before he can screw up courage to interview some great man. Again, as Mr. Miller himself points out, his success in reporting wars is due to his hatred of the use of force. The subjects which he has had to cover have generally involved force, the memories which are most vivid in his mind are still mainly violent ones—wars, revolutions, executions ; and his contention is justified, for his sensitivity is conveyed to his readers, and we are convinced of the horrors and uselessness of the strifes which he reports.

His first big job was the Mexican rebellion of 1916, which he covered as a free lance. This brought him some prominence and he was sent to cover the Great War. He gives a good description of the extraordinary tedium of a war of this scale. The job of reporting was reduced to routine, and in spite of his enterprise he was unable to see anything or go anywhere different from the scores of other pressmen.

Later he visited India to report the campaign of civil disobedience, and returned with a profound admiration for Gandhi, and a profound dismay at the brutality employed by the British in maintaining control in India. Curiously, it was this philosophy and practice of passive resistance—the self-discipline involved in suffering physical attacks without defence or retaliation—which was the most exact parallel to his own " weltanschauung ". He found that Gandhi and he shared Thoreau's *Walden* as a philosophical bible. But it was not so simple as all that. While with his left hand he firmly embraced this peaceful book, his right was always ready to scribble cables from the world's nitrocellulose infernos. Once at the front—and he didn't spare himself—he was influenced remarkably rapidly by the insistent propaganda, childish though it might be, of the side from which he happened to be operating. As aggression has more news-value, he was with the Italians in Abyssinia and with the rebels in Spain ; and being there he grew

to support—although conditionally—the purpose of their aggressions. *I Found No Peace* is always the book of a sensitive man, but sensitive to atmosphere rather than to truth. This is the stuff of which great journalists are made.

The English version is a later edition, and in this his adventures in Spain have been added. They have been included at the expense of condensing the history of his early life which is interesting but not particularly individual.

JOHN MADGE.

BIOGRAPHY

THE LETTERS OF LENIN. Translated and edited by ELIZABETH HILL and DORIS MUDIE. Chapman and Hall. 15s.

HITHERTO ONLY RANDOM letters by Lenin have been translated and published in this country. This is the first large selection to be made. It is not comprehensive : first because, of Lenin's letters, many were destroyed or lost in transit, secondly because the thousand which do survive would provide too bulky a volume for the editors' purpose. They have selected 340 letters showing Lenin's activities at every stage in his career, addressed to his family or to his fellow workers. They cover a period of just over a quarter of a century and they reveal Lenin's work at every stage during that period : before he was sent into exile, while he was in exile, the Iskra and Zarya period leading up to the 2nd Party Congress and the Split in the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party, the 1905 revolution, followed by the reaction before the growth of the Workers' Movement, the War Period, the February and October Revolutions, and the formation of the Soviets.

Lenin wrote no autobiography. For that reason he is, and will always be, a rather distant and impersonal figure in history. But even supposing that he had written an autobiography, it is unlikely that it would have been more revealing than these letters, which are the most personal relics of this great man. Lenin was not a fanatic, in the sense in which I understand that word. That is to say, he was not a man to whom revolutionary work was an obsession, distorting his mind both in relation to his own purposes and those of other people. Such fanatics are common enough, though seldom effective. Lenin was a rarer person, one whose whole being, body and mind and will, was turned to a single purpose, gaining by that absorption force and clarity.

Trotsky drew the distinction among revolutionaries between *les douces* and *les durs*. The former succumbed to their sentiments, when pity and purpose were in conflict. The latter kept their will firm, knowing that in a period of revolution concessions to the individual were made at the expense of the whole of society. Lenin was *un dur*, if ever man was. His letters show a deep understanding of people,

great sympathy and kindness. But they show at the same time an uncompromising realism and a repudiation of false sentiment, that only the highest intelligence and firmest will are capable of.

Lenin lived by the truth : every kind of falsehood was his enemy. Most men love falsehood. They are brought up on lies, from the lies told by nurses to secure good behaviour to the lies taught by school masters to secure obedience and the lies that at last they tell themselves in the hope of cheating reality of a little happiness. The liberty that Lenin wished to take from people was the liberty of making dream worlds, of turning from the improvement of the real world to the creation of unearthly paradises. He had to be hard to do that.

Yet he was not bitter, or hopeless, or cowardly. He demanded nothing of others, which he was not prepared to do himself. These letters contain plenty of criticism, but no spite, wavering, or fear. They are an amazing chronicle of work, pursued against odds which much of the time would appear overwhelming. And they culminate after twenty-one years of repression and defeat in a final triumph against even greater odds of an idea which is revolutionising a third of the surface of the earth.

A. CALDER-MARSHALL.

MARRIAGE WITH GENIUS. By FREDA STRINDBERG. Cape. 12s. 6d.

WHEN AUGUST STRINDBERG was in his forties, he married for the second time. His new wife was a young Viennese of eighteen, romantic and adoring. And he? "... he wears a soft low collar, a well-knotted black silk tie, and a slightly antiquated frock-coat, the cut of which makes him look like an official rather than the fashionable lion of a modern drawing-room. He is altogether a surprise. His hair is not grey, but blond. As he passes his hand lightly over it, it rises and ripples in yellow locks. His eyes shine and dart rays of blue, and the severity of the cheeks is softened by the gentleness of the mouth and a coquettish little moustache. He is just the same man as before and yet another. He carries his head high; there is power and dignity in his poise, his glance grows more searching and questioning and is riveted on mine as mine on his."

Madame Strindberg tells the story of her marriage in a lyrical and breathless style. It is a curious story, full of pathos, how she so much the child of light tried to save his dark genius, which was foreign to her nature. She tried to reach out and take him from that darkness, which was at the same time the cause of his writing and his insanity. She could not do it. Her brief spell was broken. Strindberg, knowing that even this last hope was gone, left her. His hatred turned out again. His marriage, made in the hope of peace, became the centre of his conflict. He recognised, as she did finally, that he was the slave of his neuroses and they would never give him rest. He gave her a divorce.

"What did our marriage mean to him and what to me—loss or gain?" Madame Strindberg writes, looking back. "As long as I lived at August Strindberg's side, I was the enemy of the Unknown and he was mine. The Unknown piled up the pyre and blew up the flame of the sacrifice in which the man I loved was consumed and my fragment of earthly happiness reduced to ashes. He was the spirit and the misty substance of the body shut him in—I, again, was no saint, no martyr, no philosopher, no pearl of wisdom—not even a quiet, intelligent gentle human being. I lived tempestuously according to my feelings and they had been cruelly hurt. Something within me did warn me that behind reality there was a deeper truth which was other than the robe of deed and word. But I was too young to comprehend.

"One must be able to lose oneself in order to find oneself," Strindberg had once said to me. I did not lose Strindberg by parting from him. I found him.

"Each of us went our own way. But my longing was always calling after him and I lived through no experience without telling him of it in spirit at night and looking at it from his standpoint. I followed the news of him in all countries. I became a nomad. I stayed nowhere long. I was driven on and on, restlessly, relentlessly, away from the one and from all, in order to follow his soul's pilgrimage from a distance, until I should be able to comprehend him entirely."

And later, talking to George Brandes. Brandes said, "Strindberg told me that he attributed the failure of your marriage to the battle between himself and you to maintain your personalities."

"Yes, that's what he said."

"Do you regret that you left August Strindberg?"

"No."

"You would not marry him a second time?"

"Oh, yes. I would marry him again, without a moment's thought or doubt. At any price."

A. CALDER-MARSHALL.

THE MAN FROM STRATFORD

KING JOHN. By WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE. Edited by JOHN DOVER WILSON. Cambridge University Press. 6s.

THANKS PARTLY TO Holinshed and partly to the spirit of the times of which the dramatists were also a manifestation, we have a body of plays which recite and recreate English history with scarcely a break from before the Conquest to the defeat of the Spanish Armada. Yet the wickedest and perhaps the most gifted king of all, neither the author of *The Troublesome Raigne* nor Shakespeare himself was able to make

the hero of a good play. Magna Carta was not seen as we to-day see it, and the anxiety of "the man from Stratford" to remove anti-catholic bias from his play prevented it from dealing simply with political issues, and as regards personalities, his presentation of John as a usurper with no rights to the throne forbade his being hero, whilst not allowing room enough for the Bastard to fill that position. *King John* is cold, conventional, roughly cut, and dry. It does not appear to have been particularly popular in Shakespeare's lifetime; it was not printed till 1623, and the first record we have of its performance is 1736. Professor Dover Wilson himself says, "it is not from the literary standpoint one of his best or most interesting plays." It might therefore be thought a carrying to extremes of scholarship, that devotes sixty-one pages of introduction to the play. But this is the only one of Shakespeare's works in which the source-play has come down to us and the editor of this latest volume in *The New Shakespeare* is able, largely through being Dover Wilson, to give us some glimpse of how Shakespeare worked; following his source, deviating from it; re-modelling, revivifying and, when his own play was done, revising that.

It is suggested that he worked, not on the published text of *The Troublesome Raigne*, but on a prompt-copy. *The Troublesome Raigne* was not published till 1591 and Professor Dover Wilson maintains that it was published to "cash in" on Shakespeare, whom he supposes, with the support of considerable evidence, to have written his *King John* in 1590. "This may have been his earliest attempt, unless *Edward III* was earlier still, at historical drama; which would account for his high-handed treatment of historical facts and the complete ignorance of chronicles which his play reveals." It will be seen that a not very interesting play has been made to furnish extremely interesting material. The volume, though printed in type too small for my taste, is as usual completed with Notes, and Harold Child adds an account of the stage history of the play, "whose importance lies in its being the chief vehicle for the introduction of archæology into the theatre" of Kemble, Kean, and Macready.

TREVOR JAMES.

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY;—POETRY

RARE POEMS OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY. Chosen and Edited by L. BIRKETT MARSHALL. Cambridge University Press. 7s. 6d.

INTENDING READERS WOULD be advised to mark well the title. It is not "Minor Poems" nor is it "Lesser Poems". The chosen word includes both, but "most of the poems have come from rare, often hitherto unknown, neglected printed volumes of poetry. Many of the latter were issued by authors and have never been reprinted. A number exist in a

single copy". It is these facts which assure one that the book is more than another volume of Jacobean and Caroline lyrics. Even so, faced with unending apostrophe to Celia, Cynthia, and the rest, how one needs that assurance. It may be presumed, however, that those who read and mark such leaves are already sure of their digestion, and chiefly worth while is it to point out such as stand out from their fellows. Thus Rowland Watkyns, a Brecknockshire vicar, surprises by lines on the Bible, scarcely suggestive of inspiration: "Much books I have perus'd, but I protest Of books the sacred Bible is the best. Some books may much of humane Learning boaste, But here's the language of the Holy Ghost." Ralph Knevet, chaplain to the Pastons, is more modern in feeling, saying of man,

"Hee well could heavenly gloryes want
If Hell or Death did not him sometimes fright.
He feares the grave, though Earth be his delight."

Thomas Heyrick (a curate—further reminder of the seventeenth century's preoccupation with religion; death, more than life, absorbed their contemplation) wrote delicately on the death of a monkey and an Indian tomeneios, "the least of birds." Collop can begin a poem with the line "Thou to the lame art legs, eyes to the blinde", and Beedome further reminds us of the fierce directness of Donne:

"When the sad ruines of that face
In its own wrinkels buried lyes,
And the stiffe pride of all its grace
By time undone, fals slack and dyes;
Wilt thou not sigh, and wish in some vext fit,
That it were now as when I courted it,"

must surely be as nearly perfect an imitation as one could wish? But perhaps the most attractive is the unknown writer, "Ephelia." In an age when men were addressing their inconstant mistresses, Celias who swooned and Delias of damask, she could suggest to

"Best of thy Sex! If Friendship can
Dwell in the Bosom of Inconstant Man"

that

"We will forget the difference of Sex,
Nor shall the World's rude Censure us Perplex.
Think me all Man; my Soul is Masculine,
And capable of as great Things as Thine."

The date is 1679. It may be worth remarking, in passing, that nine years earlier there had died a poet, Thomas Fettiplace, of whom this editor observes "His only book was *The Sinner's Tears, in Meditations and Prayers*, 1653. It is almost entirely in prose".

I should add that the last sentence by no means applies to this book as much as the period and previous combings would make one think.

TREVOR JAMES.

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY ;—STORIES

ELIZABETHAN TALES. Edited, with an Introduction, by EDWARD J. O'BRIEN. Allen and Unwin. 7s. 6d.

COMPARED TO THE lyrics of our language, our early tales are little known. Many can cap a quip with "lude singe cucku" who are ignorant of the prose-refrain, "time is ; time was ; time is past," of the anonymous story *Friar Bacon and the Brazen Head*. Pleasant it is, therefore, to have in one volume stories ranging from Sir Thomas Elyot's *Titus and Gisippus* (the source of *Euphues*) to Deloney's grim *Old Cole's End* and Breton's gay *The Eel and the Maggie*.

Without ranging further than from front to back cover of this book, we may enjoy the kindness of Gascoigne's *Tale of Mistress Frances*, or shudder as we are swept on the full tide of Elizabethan horror in Nashe's *Heracleide and Esdras*. We may find ourselves caught by the sinister spell of Adlington's brilliant *Bellerophon's Tale*, in which a man who is set to watch a corpse, that its features be not cut off by witches, finds next morning that, owing to possession of the same name, it was himself that was mutilated as he slept. "I put my hand to my nose and my nose fell off, and put my hand to my ears and my ears fell off." There are twenty-five stories in this book and they cover a period of seventy-two years—years in which both the language and outlook of Englishmen was changing. They do not make easy reading, and I think the editor was ill-advised to attempt to popularize this prose. No doubt his previous experience as an anthologist influenced him, but the influence has not been happy. To say that "the Elizabethan short story is the Cinderella of English fiction" is, besides being unpleasant, meaningless unless it is added, who were the fairy godmother and Prince Charming as well. Mr. O'Brien may have realized that you cannot talk of a "Prince Charming of prose", and so his image stops half-way. Mr. O'Brien is constantly doing this ; in a self-conscious introduction, he seeks to "explain" the authors. But if his readers come to them for the first time, it would have been more helpful to have pointed out that the closing of the theatre drove unemployed dramatists, such as Dekker, to pamphleteering. I find it, further, difficult to agree with his revised punctuation. This causes a portion of Dekker to be printed as

"A merry bargain did a tinker meet withal in a country town, through which a citizen of London being driven, to keep himself under the lee shore in the tempestuous contagion of the plague year and casting up his eye for some harbour, spied a bush at the end of a pole, the ancient badge of a country ale-house, into which as good luck was, without any resistance of the barbarians, that all this year used to keep such landing places, doffing his bonnet he struck in."

In the pamphlet, *The Wonderfull Yeare*, in which this story occurs, it is printed, as it was written :

"A meryer bargaine than the poore Sextons, did a Tincker meete with all in a Countrey Towne; through which a Citizen of London beeing driven (to keepe himselfe under the lee shore in this tempestuous contagion) and casting up his eye for some harbour, spied a bush at the ende of a poole, (the auncient badge of a Countrey Ale-House :) Into which as good lucke was (without any resistance of the Barbarians, that all this yeare used to keepe such landing places) veiling his Bonnet, he stricke in."

Discounting the spelling, I think there can be no doubt that the second is easier to read, if only because, feeling for words apart, it is the punctuation called for by the breathless snowballing style of construction. These stories were written when English as we know it was being formed. To alter one part of it whilst keeping the rest is only to do injustice to both.

Moreover, these stories can never be popular in the sense that *Best Stories* of later years may be. Apart from the fact that popular readers may be too lazy to bother with these sentences, there is the further drawback that many of these tales are simply dull, rather inexpert, reporting, in which the writers were trying to give what is now provided by the penny press. Even Dekker, in the story quoted above, is writing poor stuff compared to the elegy on Queen Elizabeth a few pages earlier in the same pamphlet :

"The report of her death (like a thunder-clap) was able to kill thousands, it tooke away the hearts from millions; for having brought up (even under her wing) a nation that . . . never shouted any other *Ave* than for her name, never sawe the face of any Prince but her selfe, never understode what that strange outlandish word *Change* signified, how was it possible but that her sicknes should throw abroad an universall feare and her death an astonishment?"

ending with the great dirge, "She was the Courtier's treasure, therefore he had cause to mourne; the Lawyer's sword of justice, he might well faint," and so on, in that full cadence which not even conceit could cramp.

It was in such writing as this that the Elizabethans were at home, and for that reason their stories can never be for the general reader. Only for some can they be a treasury—for those who will trace the growth of English prose from the almost German construction of this, in 1531 ;

"he sent out from the bottom of his heart deep and cold sighs in such plenty that it lacked but little that his heart was not riven in pieces,"

to this, of 1592, but so modern, by Chettle ;

"had all India been the meed of his abstinence, eat he will or die he must."

Those who will detect characterisation breaking through maze of imagery ; those who have the nimbleness to follow pen and mind of writer as both fly off at not always similar tangents ; and those who relish such allusion to hanging as "'scaped dancing in a hempen circle"—these will find in this book a lasting cause for gratitude. But I will found a new book club on my own if they are the "general reader" whom Mr. O'Brien has set out to captivate.

TREVOR JAMES.

NOVELS

TWO LEAVES AND A BUD. By MULK RAJ ANAND. Lawrence and Wishart. 7s. 6d.

THIS NOVEL HAS all the qualities which have given Anand a leading position amongst contemporary revolutionary novelists in England. Shorter and slighter than *Untouchable* or *The Coolie*, it is nevertheless in some ways more ambitious, since, instead of portraying one hero, he has given a broad picture of Indian life, in which the domestic life of the natives working in the tea plantation is contrasted with that of their Anglo-Indian exploiters. The two interwoven strands of narrative culminate in the murder of Gangu, the coolie, by Hunt, assistant on the Macpherson tea estate.

The story is skilfully and movingly told. Anand writes with pity and indignation of the coolies which he can enter into imaginatively with a passionate interest. He is rather less successful in describing the lives of the Anglo-Indians. His English characters are by no means caricatures, but they are too flatly portrayed and, although they act a great deal, they do not develop. I cannot help feeling that he would have been far more successful in describing the relationship between Barbara and de la Havre if he had dramatized their actions and what they said to each other much more, instead of entering into de la Havre's self-communings.

In fact this book often gives the impression that it is a sketch for a novel rather than a finished novel. Thoughts take the place of scenes, description of action, and the writing, especially towards the end, is melodramatic and overcoloured. Nevertheless this is a novel remarkable for its interest and passionate sincerity.

STEPHEN SPENDER.

ABSALOM, ABSALOM! By WILLIAM FAULKNER. Chatto and Windus. 8s. 6d.

CERTAINLY MR. FAULKNER merits the best rejection slip of the month. He has laboured with such very long sentences in this very long novel. As his inspiration has thinned, so his writing has thickened. Attempting to recapture the strange atmosphere, caught so effortlessly in *Sanctuary*, he has worked one or two tricks which deserve critical underlining. A less obvious example (muddling of time sequence has become hack convention) is the elaborate description of the beginning of an incident (when Sutpen is arrested by the Vigilance Committee) followed by but a hint as to its conclusion (how did he really get out of that mess?). The result is that the reader is left with an expansion of imaginative possibilities—or isn't! And one wonders if it is not because the corn-cob fitted so startlingly into *Sanctuary* that Mr. Faulkner believes it necessary to sprinkle horrors into succeeding volumes—Sutpen amusing himself

by setting two naked negroes to fight one another in the bloody manner of mad dogs.

Still, he must not be denied his spell. If you have the patience to tackle this over-written (therefore lacking in dramatic emphasis) tale, you do get a queer feeling of listening at old closed gates in the corridors of Mississippi-American-Civil-War history. Characters are never seen face to face ; they blur into the shade of Sutpen who descends on a small community, builds a house with his own hands, and doom for his house with his coloured mistresses. It is all rather like running your head into a cobweb in a dark barn ; and there is a certain rich magic about this overspun labour.

OSWELL BLAKESTON.

THE YEARS. By VIRGINIA WOOLF. The Hogarth Press. 8s. 6d.

MRS. WOOLF'S BOOKS are awaited too eagerly. We long for her to revisit us, and in the process, exaggerate the pleasure that we shall have. It is less her fault than ours, therefore, that *The Years*, after years of anticipation, leaves us with a sense of disappointment.

The author has taken a character from each of her preceding novels, and has introduced them, under other names, as a single family, against a background beginning in 1880 and ending at the present day. There is Jacob, only he is now called Martin, who turns again into North ; there is the childhood of Eleanor, a slightly stouter Mrs. Dalloway, and Kitty, born too soon, with a tea-party that was once almost a novel in *Night and Day*. In itself, this might have been an exciting experiment. Characters grow, as the author's mind alters, and it should not be considered necessary for a novelist to lock them up in the water-tight compartments of a single book. Only in this volume, it is difficult to remember the people, one is waiting always for an answer, or an ending, that never comes. It is partly the sense of time. Mrs. Woolf cannot shake off the nineteenth century. There is no reason that she should. It is better for an author to re-create what he has felt and known, than to record merely external impressions, the function of the journalist. One of the sections, for example, is headed 1917. There is an air-raid, talk of the war. Yet it is unreal, unimportant, whereas the smell of the dust, the exact temperature of the day, comes back to us from 1880, the hours flow and are not static. The nursery, the feeling of the house to a young child, touches our own unconscious experiences, though our environment may have been a different one ; there her valuations and her queries are familiar, she is, in fact, the Mrs. Molesworth of the adult world.

If we do not agree with the form of the novel, there is always the language. The words are fluid, however much the background (and this may be design) repeats itself.

MORID SPALDING.

A TIME TO LAUGH. By RHYS DAVIES. Heinemann. 8s. 6d.

IN THIS NOVEL, the gifts which Englishmen may read about for years without believing can be seen lucidly at work. Rhys Davies writes of a South Wales village, in which a young doctor feels more drawn to the workers than to his own middle-class. It is a problem which many are facing to-day and worked out against a background of strikes, with love (not romance) playing its part, it becomes a story of noble vigour and natural reality. The author knows his people ; there is no straining for effect, though intensity often flames out into a passionate lyricism. *A Time to Laugh* is long, but when you have finished it, you feel that it was short, for it is distinguished from many novels on similar themes by being beautifully written.

JOHN EDWARDS.

PERILOUS SANCTUARY. By D. J. HALL. Harrap. 7s. 6d.

NEW MEXICO AND the rites of the Penitentes, who still enact in reality the drama that is portrayed on the stage of Ober-Ammergau from the background of this novel. The central figure is an American who, used to purely material values and fleeing from justice, finds sanctuary in the home of a Spanish landowner. There are here possibilities of interesting psychological contrasts, in the widely different attitudes of the American, the Spaniard and the Mexican peasants to religion ; but they are not realized. The undoubted mystery and horrors of the crucifixion rites are not conveyed, the characters become wooden and the story sinks to the commonplace. The peculiar atmosphere of New Mexico so much older in the New World than anything in the Old, its physical characteristics, the blend of ice and flame, of league-wide vistas and dark mountains (all of which have influenced each civilization coming there) is not in this book, whose main interest peters out in a love-story and a pursuit by the American police.

PETRIE TOWNSHEND.

DAUGHTERS AND SONS. By I. COMPTON-BURNETT. Gollancz. 7s. 6d.

THIS BOOK INTERESTS because of its method. It applies the technique of an O'Neill play, the statements of a Gertrude Stein, to a novel of family life. The volume is written in dialogue, with a few descriptive passages, that might be notes on the drama in a programme. Once the story is started, it runs, as in *Strange Interlude*, along double lines ; there are sentences spoken, and sentences thought, with a curious pattern of answers that sometimes confirm, and sometimes amplify, the words a character has been thinking only. It is exciting therefore, for all workers with words, but it is useless to pretend that it is easy to read.

A grandmother dominates a large family. Their changing relationships are studied as they move around the fixed pole of her autocratic,

powerful figure. A suggestion of parental jealousy, between the now not quite so successful author-father, and his suddenly successful author-daughter, promises more than is actually worked out. Perhaps the two governesses, the incompetent Miss Bunyan, and the successful Miss Hallam, who stayed to marry and rule, are the most vivid of the background portraits.

At the beginning the family meet for breakfast ; at the end, during a dinner party, the grandmother dies, but the party, and life, continue. There is the identical effect in the style of abruptness combined with a sense less of stagnation than of no-movement. It is rare to find a book written from the point of view of the mind, and therefore, in spite of occasional monotony, *Daughters and Sons* deserves wide reading.

ERNEST HUDSON.

THE TOMATO FIELD. By STUART ENGSTRAND. Secker and Warburg. 7s. 6d.

TOWNBRED WIVES who break up under hard farm-hours have been written of before. This author has a social twist, in the shape of a cannery which expands astonishingly at the expense of the farmers, whose land is in pawn with the cannery-trust. But it was a mistake to introduce such a melodramatic "hot-stuff" city wife, and it is doubtful if such a figure as Miriam would have had the character to become a cannery-girl. The spooning to-do, in particular, is feeble. But this first book as a whole is strong, grimly realistic and those of us who are the kind of people our fathers warned us against will think it an extraordinarily good picture. It is good to find a young author with a mind of his own, a rare enough feeling for nature's blind forces and the ability to translate these in pieces of poetry. The novel seems typical of the younger American generation—serious, spiced, concentrated and good documentary. But when Engstrand turns his invention on other than pathological cases, and writes of a more representative family, his sensibility will command greater attention.

KEIDRYCH RHYS.

INVASION '14. By MAXENCE VAN DER MEERSCH. Translated by Gerard Hopkins. Constable. 8s. 6d.

MEN WITHOUT MERCY. By A. DOBLIN. Translated by T. and P. Blewitt. Gollancz. 8s. 6d.

WE HAVE HAD novels without number treating of the war from the point of view of those who fought and refused to fight. But I believe *Invasion '14* is the first war novel to appear in England concerned with those living in the conquered territories behind the enemy lines. Its author, as a child of 8-12, himself experienced the rigours of the occupation. But

his book is not autobiographical. He has chosen to depict the whole scene in Roubaix and the villages round, finding in the ordeal of the war-years the test of spiritual worth. "Here hearts are proved as gold in the furnace," he quotes from Thomas à Kempis, and his central interpreter, Decraemer, a patriotic industrialist, who in the enforced austerity of prison reaches the height of mysticism, endorses that view.

For the purpose of this moral test, the economic and political causes of the Great War are of no interest. The German army sweeps across Belgium and the North of France and suddenly whole communities find themselves in the situation which puts their characters to the test. The capitalist has to choose between treachery to his country or to his self-interest. Decraemer burns his factory rather than let the enemy use it: Barthélémy David shamelessly trades with the enemy, accumulating a vast fortune, a tithe of which he disburses to the poor in charity: others compromise by selling to the enemy secretly through David's agency. These last have neither the charity of David nor the courage of Decraemer.

It is impossible to summarize the number of complex strands which make up *Invasion* '14. There are fifty-eight names listed among the Principal Characters. They include a round dozen masterly studies: Isidore Duydt, who from patriotism and bravery refused to register with the Germans and was thus driven into an underworld which corrupted those very qualities which led him there: Berthe Senneville, the fiercely patriotic mother of a lime-burner, martyred by her own people because she would not take the easy course that they had: Alain Laubigier, submitted to the same influences as Isidore, yet confirmed in character by them.

This is a rich book, of a breadth and intensity extraordinary in so young an author. Yet the author's concentration on the spiritual effect of living in occupied territory has prevented him from giving an even deeper significance to his book. No character seeks to understand why war should occur. There is no study of the socialist or the class-conscious worker subjected to foreign invasion. In a book, one of whose justifications must be comprehensiveness, these omissions are important. Had it been an earthquake or a tidal wave, one could have understood the author's indifference to the trigger of his drama. But in the case of war, man-made and man-resisted, one finds this indifference leading to a flat and comfortless spirituality. The book ends, for example, with the following paragraph which is of small succour against the activities of Musso-Hitlerism:—

Yes, Abbé, you are right. One must learn a lot, and find much consolation, in seeing on the faces of one's fellow-men the sign of that mystery which remains for ever unsolved, inviolate and complete . . . I believe that from now on, I, like you, when I am tempted to despair, shall be able to discern on the faces I see about me, on the faces of women, of mothers crushed by devotion and sacrifice, a gleam of that Divine consciousness which I cannot always see in the sky above. . . .

At its time of publication, *Alexanderplatz* was exciting and impressive. *Men Without Mercy* is a disappointing book. This second novel, despite the assurance of Mr. Gollancz's prolific blurb writer, is not even better than the first. It is long, stodgy and tedious, a chronicle of Karl, the eldest son of a bankrupt father, whom destitution drives to friendship with a young revolutionary called Paul. The two elements in Karl's life are those which beset everyone living under capitalism, the choice between material success and integrity. His mother stands for the first. She refuses to give him money to help Paul to escape, and after this climax to the first section, we find Karl fifteen years later, materially successful and well-married, yet unhappy at the hollowness of his life. In the third section, Karl is ruined by the crisis, deserted by his wife, and driven back to the revolution of his youth. He is killed in a strike which grows violent. He is fighting for the workers, but the papers hail him on his death as a patriot who has given his life for the bosses.

The plot is straightforward and good, but as it is slowed down and distorted by turgidity, *Men Without Mercy* is irritating.

A. CALDER-MARSHALL.

THE MAKING OF A HERO. By NICHOLAS OSTROVSKI. Translated by Alec Brown. Secker and Warburg. 8s. 6d.

TOO OFTEN a book leaves a sour, stagnant taste in the mouth, a moral of indecision and unexpressed distaste. Too often the emotions and the crises seem tragically personal and unimportant. Here is a story which combines a real understanding of individuals' problems and feelings with an underlying theme of overwhelming greatness. It is significant that the most moving passage of all describes the coming of the news of Lenin's death to a small village ; it gives a true insight into the meaning of this important event to the illiterate, superstitious peasants to whom Lenin was never more than a half-understood legend. Emperors had come and gone, little fathers ; and poverty and servitude had continued without a change. And then there had appeared a new leader, a saviour who had risen to free them from the shackles of their masters, and who had helped them to make the land their own. And when he died, they could not believe it. But they knew that they must make him live in their own lives, and they must pledge themselves to be his disciples. The Party of the Bolsheviks must go forward with even greater resolution than before. The similarity to early Christianity is amazing.

The book is largely autobiographical. Ostrovski, like the hero, fought through the civil war as a boy, and in the course of the struggle he received a blow on the backbone ; in time this wound produced a gradually increasing paralysis which made him unable to move and finally blind. His strength had been terrific, and for all his life he had overworked himself in the slow persuasion of the peasantry to adopt the

new ethic and the new technique. Even when his power was leaving his body, his courage raged on. Lying in bed, he conducted study circles for young comrades; sometimes the thought of suicide tempted him, but it never conquered him. At last he decided how he should spend the rest of his life. He determined to write. And so he started, in an atmosphere of soothing incredulousness, for he had been practically illiterate. His first novel was lost in the Soviet mail, and he had no copy. *The Making of a Hero* was his second, and it is fortunate indeed that it has survived. But not even Ostrovski's fortitude could defend him from the slow assault of paralysis, and now he has died at the tragic age of thirty.

JOHN MADGE.

DEATH WITHOUT BATTLE. By LUDWIG RENN. (Translated anonymously.) Secker and Warburg. 6s.

HOW IS ONE to review this book? It is a true story. A familiar one to most of us now, the persecution of unoffending people, imprisonment, and the beating of men to death.

Renn's novel *War*, is already well known in England. The sequel *Nachkrieg*, in many ways a more interesting book, has not been translated. It was the story of an officer's attempt to fit into the Germany of the early post-war years. Renn himself fought through the war, was imprisoned in a concentration camp in 1933 and on his escape from Germany, went straight to Spain.

The title of his present book, though not a translation of the German one, is an exact picture of the contents. It is death, and it is without battle, that is the fate of many of the characters, though we are left at the end, if not with hope, at least with the knowledge that there will be no surrender. There is not a single unnecessary sentence, everything is clear, with that sudden sharpness mountains have at the end of a winter storm. The young national socialist, punished because he would not give up his ideals, the officer who had lost his own world, and could not accept the new, the quietly courageous communist in the concentration camp, are shown against a background of the chief historical events of the last three years, each influencing the other. Perhaps the one fault of the book is its under-statement. It may make the volume more popular in England, where violent assertions are unwelcome, but it seems almost too quiet a record at moments, of the appalling conditions Renn himself has experienced.

MORID SPALDING.

A PENNY FOR THE POOR. By BERTOLT BRECHT. Translated by Desmond I. Vesey. Verses translated by Christopher Isherwood. Robert Hale 7s. 6d.

BRECHT's *Die Dreigroschenroman* was first published in Holland in 1934; it has now been clearly and accurately translated by Mr. Vesey, but

its appearance as *A Penny for the Poor* is likely to bewilder, rather than stimulate, the English reading public.

As it stands, this book still contains a certain number of familiar characters, *sed quantum mutatos ab illis!* Macheath the "Knife" runs a chain of B. Stores; Peachum has organized beggary on a professional basis, and, in the hope of making money out of the Government during the Boer War, is induced to speculate in a Marine Transport Company. Both get hopelessly involved in the ramifications of big business; but ultimately, intrigue, graft, corruption, crime, provide a temporary solution, leaving Macheath married to Polly Peachum and dishonour triumphant. The form of the book is confusing, the characters flat and drab; scenes that were brilliant in the original operetta lose all their verve and sparkle in the pseudo-Marxist atmosphere of this interminable tract. It is a pity that such a work should be so monumentally monotonous, for some of the rhetorical passages (printed in *italics*) would make excellent material for a sermon or a didactic play. But one thing is now clear: whatever else Brecht may be, he is no novelist.

A word must be said about the verses and mottoes that decorate the chapter heads. These are spoils and trophies left over from *Die Dreigroschenoper* and *Der Dreigroschenfilm*. They have been sympathetically translated by Christopher Isherwood; but unfortunately he has forgotten or deliberately ignored the fact that these verses were primarily written to be sung. For instance, the poem (*Moritat*) that preludes Book Two is written in trochaic metre and was originally sung in the stage version to a barrel-organ tune. In translating such songs, it is of elementary importance to observe, not only the metre, but also the caesura. The first verse of the German original runs as follows:—

Und der Haifisch der hat Zähne
Und die trägt er im Gesicht,
Und Macheath der hat ein Messer,
Doch das Messer sieht man nicht.

Mr. Isherwood's translation runs:—

For the shark, he has his teeth and
You can see them in his face,
And MacHeath, he has his knife but
Hides it in a different place.

The first rough translation of *Die Dreigroschenoper* made some years ago by the B.B.C. for broadcasting purposes was woefully inadequate. Isherwood's attempt to be literal at all costs has led him to make a number of elementary mistakes. There is still room for a definitive translation of these "songs", which are among Brecht's best work and fully deserve some measure of immortality.

E. W. WHITE.

THE BELLS OF BASEL. By LOUIS ARAGON. (Translated by Haakon M. Chevalier.) Peter Davies and Lovat Dickson. 8s. 6d.

THIS TRANSLATION OF *Les Cloches de Bâle* is welcome if it places the novel within reach of a greater number of readers, though it is impossible not to reflect on the loss it has suffered in the translating. It is one of Aragon's greatest books. Divided into four parts, each named after the central figure, the character who stands out above all and inhabits the book is Catherine. Her life is traced from her hotel childhood in a dreary cosmopolitan bourgeois setting to her gradual development into independence of thought and judgment, her acceptance of reality, and her final identification with the cause of the workers.

The whole background of the book is the political history of France during this century, many real personages are introduced into the story, and this method gives the book a curious flavour. It is never irritating as in many English novels where the real seems brought in as a kind of guarantee of good faith, but it does add to the earnestness of the book. The fact never outweighs the fiction, because the fiction always feels like fact. It is impossible not to believe we have known Catherine, suffered with her, lived in the constant shadow of death, found life in a cause and yet never become a mere impersonal example: and so with Diane, and in less degree with Victor. They are persons, not characters. At the same time they represent an age, the age before the present. As the author writes "at the end of the year 1912 . . . already a whole humanity exists of which the Catherine Simonidzes perceive only the shadows through a screen. . . ." At the very end of the book he gives further promise when he writes of Clara Zetkin, "She is the woman of to-day . . . with her the social problem of women is no longer different from that of man." While all may not agree with this dictum it is of the greatest interest to trace in *The Bells of Basel* how far different was the social problem till now, and how much of that difference and difficulty was undoubtedly artificial.

Aragon has given us a study of tremendous depth and power, of the psychology of an individual woman and the history of a nation. Of Europe also, for the birth and growth of the state of affairs which have produced the dictatorships and the mob insanity of to-day are clearly depicted. We look forward to his promise of another book—"The woman of modern times is born and it is of her that I sing. And it is of her that I shall sing."

PETRIE TOWNSHEND.

FAMINE. By LIAM O'FLAHERTY. Gollancz. 8s. 6d.

IRELAND HAS HAD troubles more recent than the great famine, and probably few Englishmen save historians know much of that time of horror, of the days when children were murdered by their demented

parents who watched them die before their eyes of slow starvation, when the dead went unburied and when in addition to the worst of physical misery was added the worst of man's inhumanity to man. O'Flaherty has brought to life again the whole ghastly story of those famine years. His book has more than a vivid and accurate pictorial quality. As in *The Informer* and *Thy Neighbour's Wife* it is not only the political and social background of Irish life that remains in the memory, but, predominantly, the lives lived against it. *Famine* is a great book which will take its rightful place among the growing number of considered chronicles of Ireland mainly on account of the truth and force of its characterisation. The famine which brought the two families of Kilmartin and Gleeson to ruin had very different effects on each member. The study of Mary, the young Gleeson wife of Martin Kilmartin, is a fine study of a strong well-balanced character happily adjusted to a simple strenuous peasant life, raising her husband's family to her own more highly civilized level. Caught in the grip of the famine, struggling for her infant's existence and tortured by the sights and sounds around her, she becomes mystical in her agony, desperate, and then concerned only with the last brute struggle for life. At the end, she escapes to the New World with her husband and child. But one knows that to the close of her days, she will bear the marks of the famine. Irish-Americans of the present day still bear those marks like inherited stigmata. Such a famine changes the very texture of a people, facts may be forgotten even in Ireland, but emotional experiences which are all in the nature of the most cruel traumata leave their sign on the national as well as on the individual psyche. It is because this novel realises this truth that it rises far above a merely brilliant chronicle.

PETRIE TOWNSHEND.

SALAVIN. By GEORGES DUHAMEL. Translated by GLADYS BILLINGS.
Dent. 8s. 6d.

THE WHOLE OF Duhamel's work on the life and experiences of one man, Salavin, has been now for the first time both translated into English and published in one volume. The effect is somehow vastly different than when the four books were read separately in French. Salavin at the beginning tells his own story. Later, seen through the eyes of others and his creator, this develops into that of a being apparently different; a hero, who at last is able to act out in reality the role of saint and martyr to which he always felt himself drawn in fantasy. Inwardly one feels Salavin changes remarkably little, his growth is always on the same obsessional patterns. Such a human portrait is undoubtedly an achievement, and Duhamel has not failed in power or design, he has full command of his subject and with the excellent economy of the French genius never allows himself to be side-tracked by the picaresque.

Yet at the end, one is conscious of disappointment, of a certain flatness, and one has a conviction that Salavin has not repaid so much study. His character is neither a picture nor an analysis. The book loses considerably in this translation, which is uninspired and often too literal, giving the prose an archaic effect and adding to the general feeling of remoteness from real life.

PETRIE TOWNSHEND.

POETRY AND VERSE

A FURTHER RANGE. By ROBERT FROST. Cape. 5s.

SELECTED POEMS. By ROBERT FROST. Cape. 5s.

One of the pleasures which Frost gives us is inclusion in his loneliness. To say so may smack of an arrogance, to which some seem to have succumbed. Though one might have thought that, to at any rate discerning readers, Robert Frost's work has for long been one of the standing pleasures of reading, the publishers of the *Selected Poems* state that "it is a striking tribute to the appeal of his poetry that Mr. W. H. Auden, Mr. Cecil Day Lewis, Mr. Paul Engle, and Mr. Edwin Muir should have contributed four specially written essays of critical appreciation". It is surely also a token of the times, that Mr. Frost should be so introduced. We may wonder for what kind of reader these introductions are intended when we come on such an observation as "the bulk of his work consists of monologues or dialogues written in an even colloquial blank verse". And when we read that "few writers have managed naturalistic conversation in verse with so little self-consciousness and fuss", we see chiefly that the author of at least one of these essays does not go very deep in his "critical appreciation". Edwin Muir analyses *The Axe-helve* interestingly for those who cannot analyse it themselves, Day Lewis is, as might be expected, mature and understanding, and Paul Engle expresses what Frost means to an American. None of these is, however, valuably illuminating, and the most striking tribute to Frost's work is, perhaps, that English readers can feel what he means to an American, without themselves feeling made strange thereby.

The *Selected Poems*, chosen by the author, remind us of his faults and his virtues and these the new book extends. In no sense repeating, *A Further Range* yet shows him failing, when he does fail, in the same way—lapses which are not due to flatness but to inappropriate heightening, one or two poems being more "poetic" than hitherto. It shows him succeeding, as he does succeed, with that fulness of suggestion in understatement which makes his poems so free of strain that only by the quietness they cause do you realize with what you have been left. There are pieces, *They Were Welcome To Their Belief* among them, to set beside any of his previous best; there are verses such as—

“ Wind goes from farm to farm in wave on wave,
 But carries no cry of what is hoped to be.
 There may be little or much beyond the grave.
 But the strong are saying nothing until they see.”

and lines which perhaps supplant others as the final word of his particular speech :—

“ It’s knowing what to do with things that counts,”

It is that line that I would hand back, if I wished to explain Robert Frost. With him, an act, the thought behind it, the thought from it and the speech are unbroken. Each proceeds from the other. Perhaps that is why “fortunate” is the word that comes to mind, and why content and at-homeness are what, we think, give that inspiring quality to the pleasure. The author knows what to do with things, life being one ; he is not lost, he is in working friendship, both with the world and with a wren. It makes his poetry seem simpler than it is and, thus reversing many poets’ procedure, he again makes us fortunate. That condition is increased by the type in which the publishers have so respectably printed these by no means expensive books.

TREVOR JAMES.

ION, Of EURIPIDES. Translated, with commentaries, by H. D. Chatto and Windus. 6s.

THE DIFFICULTY OF reviewing is the difficulty of casting a shadow of one’s self between sun and seer. Whilst wishing to be merely transmitter, the mere fact of appreciation can at times cause one to blur readers’ vision with heliograph instead of allowing it Helios.

So, though more severely, with translation. The poet (for a translator must be one, if not necessarily an author), the poet must do more than convey the work of inspiration ; he can do that and still intervene. A true translator must return to the original impulse, meekly yet militant. But of those few who return, how many stay there, are unable to make the voyage back ? Fortunately, for us, not H. D. The voyage back is as seemingly plain-sailing as the voyage there. One does not feel of her vibrant versions that here is a pedant slogging away at an English text, Euripides in English. One feels Euripides speaking through English ; not inevitably in the same accent, but in the authentic voice. In short, this translator has the gift of being simple speaking-tube and yet a wand which gives us the magic of feeling : not only the receiving but the outgiving of the original. Beyond that, the rest is detail. But it is detail which counts. H. D. has turned the tables on academic translators by compressing instead of padding. A commentary interpolated in the action might seem to interrupt. It does not. This text is so

essentially of drama, Greek drama, that the comments count as additional chorus. They make oddly visual impact, one is not only reading a play but seeing its performance. One is enabled, that is to say, to imagine, and that is the test of a poem.

JOHN VAUXHALL.

¹/₂₀ POEMS. By E. E. CUMMINGS. Contemporary Poetry and Prose Editions. 2s.

IN THE THICK air of our various righteousnesses Mr. Cummings' intelligent objectivity is a necessity. He doesn't know what he wants because the world has almost everything he doesn't want in it: iconoclasm is a full-time job, and a very satisfying one, particularly when such an animal as faith continues to simulate life. Mr. Cummings never becomes drunk with intelligence, as might happen to a less objective person, and has invented and mastered a vocabulary of forms deliciously appropriate. With such weapons of syntax in the hands of so cool-headed and charming a warrior the English are not safe, and poetry has a chance.

Apart from his constructive destruction he begins the important work of de-anthropomorphization in a brilliantly easeful manner, notable in no. 3 of this selection. Anthropocentric man has had, so far, few effective prophets and forerunners and co-operators; surrealists have the technique but always seem to be getting there, enjoying the hiatus too much to advance. Picasso and Mr. Cummings should understand one another in this respect. Both know the intelligence and fatuity and pain and necessity of not only disintegrating the ego-sensation, but of putting the bits on any possible objective hook, and maybe the derivative hook. The process begins with the stimulus of nausea, will be advanced by poets who perceive, as distinct from those who contrive in obedience to a sensible intuition, the jargon of ego made objective.

"Open your thighs to fate": Mr. Cummings expresses considerably completely the times; the incompleteness is with the "fate" who swallows the contrapuntalism of ideologies.

PHILIP O'CONNOR.

CALAMITERROR. By GEORGE BARKER. Faber. 5s.

OPINIONS, EVEN NEAR-ESSENTIAL desiderata of poets' opinions, are pathetic to read, unless one has circumstantial sympathy with their formulator. Mr. Barker's strong poem goes left into revolutionary utterances and right into the always correlative flamboyance, the tenseness of adjective and feminine fascination before ordinary things that worries itself into metrical architecture on a square inch of dung. Of such an important poet it is good to stress (1) his immaturity, observable as hysterical slides into cosmic apostrophe and melancholia-contortions,

(2) that he is not yet a contemporary poet and will never be if his spread-eagling right and left continue. His "intelligence", which as a poet means the pattern of his stupidities, does as usual get in the way of his perception.

He has self-involving emotional reactions. He believes some people are right and some wrong, and considers this has something to do with him; and thinks the colour of their eyes less relevant. He is tied with, has illusions of sympathy with, all sorts of things, people, and ideas. These are the general qualities of the young poet, about which the young poet usually erects a fence of antennæ communicating with a spitting mechanism of force and accuracy.

His poetry, as all this implies, is important. To open our gullets for the righteous-revolutionisms he employs marvellously quietly-strong form. He has the sentiment-of-form, content becomes glib and flamboyant to fit into it. More seriously unattractive is that sentiment-of-contemporaneity, the conspiracy of indomitably-façaded young men riding the snicker of living in wildly chaotic times. This loose, fashionable lounging in the noises, colours, contradictions, absurdities of the age is no eyecleaner for a poet, whose bed should be his body, not furniture from the store he has to view. This, of course, expresses a personal bias, that poets should remain objective, perhaps as irrelevant a one as Mr. Barker's probable "Poets should achieve revolutionary consciousness"—but mine could be destroyed in the ring while I nipped about scot-free outside, while right-thinking Mr. Barker dies with his.

He is in the interesting condition of being extravert to the degree of physical consciousness, and accordingly associatively selects compatible images from the "outside", and there need be no certainty as to whether the action and reflection is in the shapes of his body or in the world. He is genuinely interested, in the fullest sense, in these images, that afford him a widespread consciousness of phenomena, disconnected from eventuality, which is left on the idealistic plane and will maybe never re-engage his richly conceived images in a continuity. Guts and gas is the diagnosis, which have not fused to become light.

PHILIP O'CONNOR.

NOT SO DEEP AS A WELL. By DOROTHY PARKER. Hamish Hamilton. 6s.

THE TITLE IS apt. Dorothy Parker leaves Ruth Pitter to play Ophelia and herself claims kinship with Mercutio—gay, gallant, and a little given to going on. Suffering perhaps from her fame as a wit, she is determined to remind us she has wept. But a heart on a sleeve is not the best form of handkerchief nor is irony a bell which allows many changes to be rung. Housman's reputation was helped by the fact that he wrote

few poems. Dorothy Parker collects two hundred. Too bad? No, only half. There are plenty to remind you of the author of the crack about the girl who wore glasses; plenty to remind you of other authors; but there are also several in which poet and woman of the world are perfectly matched. Then there is no reminder, but an individual voice which can give any inflection, comic or tragic, to its chosen theme-song of "So what?"

A. WILLS.

SING TO BRITANNIA'S GLORY. By AN ULSTER-SCOT. "K's,"
Arthur Lane, Belfast.

OF ALL THE verse produced by this summer's ceremonies, this is my favourite. It is introduced by the Head Master of the Belfast Royal Academy, who captained the Irish Rugby team in 1912 and 1914. "Ulster-Scot" himself plays Soccer and "first-class judges say that he was superb. His combination of cool daring, thrust, and skill was unique. It seems to me that some of his qualities as a footballer may be discerned in this volume. He has energy, rhythm, speed, and courage. As one fond of games, I honour his athletic prowess and as an admirer of vigorous expression, I salute his verses." Among titles are *The Flag My Soul Salutes*, *Ye Little Folks of Britain*, and *High Heaven's Bulldog Breed*. A death-scene is perhaps too full of violent movement to be comforting—

"Wave the Union Jack before me,
While you hold the Cross on high,
Singing to Britannia's glory
As I wave you all good-bye."

There seems to me over-much noise about that and I prefer

"So ever thank your Maker
And don't forget that He
Expects you to be British,
And don't forget to be",

but my real favourite is *A British Toast*—

"Here's to the man of men, who is
The King of Gentlemen—
A manly King, a Kingly man;
God bless the King. Amen."

The economy with which the effect is obtained seems to me striking, and there is a fine instance of unaffected simplicity in the concluding verses:

"Here's to our land of Heroes and
Of Heroines as well,
And to Britannia's noble race—
The great despair of hell.

Here's to our Workmen and our Lords,
 And all who become between,
 All members of the greatest race
 The world has ever seen."

These preferences are purely personal and I should state that all the verses maintain this standard with surprising, almost startling, ease. The value of the book is materially increased by a cover which depicts the deck of a battleship, bearing Queen Mary, in weeds, and George VI holding a sword in one hand and a Union Jack in the other while George V looks down on this scene from a heaven in which R.A.F. planes manœuvre.

A. WILLS.

SEBASTIAN. By RAYNER HEPPENSTALL. Dent. 2s. 6d.

STRAIGHT OR CURLY? By CLIFFORD DYMENT. Dent. 2s. 6d.

THE ART OF letter-writing, now held to be in decay, may have been due, I would suggest, to the infrequency of posts; correspondents had time to consider, to construct. To something of the same cause may be attributed the condition of much modern verse-writing. Certainly, neither of these authors would seem, in their second, to have added anything appreciable to their recent first books. "Verse," I find myself saying, "is *not* a diary, nor is poetry a diet—to be discovered, with luck digested and in time re-delivered." It is, though no one knows what it is, chiefly an unconscious decision, a craftsmanship of delirium, "joy", and "job" seen so clearly that the last letters intermingle in the bright air of one's mind. These authors are unlikely to agree with me. Heppenstall, particularly, is not remarkable for joy, and in both the job is half-finished. Of the two, Dymont, reflecting in turn de la Mare, Sassoon, Blunden, Davies, etc., is an innocent abroad who's not got very far abroad. That doesn't prevent his being un-at home where he has got. Still, like the screen hero of *David Copperfield*, he's such a good boy, and he should appeal to critics older than himself. He so manifestly isn't storming any citadel, there can be no danger in letting him in by the back door.

To Heppenstall the world, as far as one can gather, is a Vale of Whoah! only brightened by the fact that most days in the week can be attributed to some saint or other. There can be no doubting his integrity; he has an awful time with himself. But one feels he would do much better to go out and enjoy himself, rather than sit and add to his torture by twisting his introspection into verse, which, though often interesting, is neither inspired nor illuminating. He and his colleague make an odd complementary couple—Dymont wool-gathering, Heppenstall shredding his sackcloth. My heart goes out to them; as to my eyes, I must confess to a blind spot—in the third; it would need second sight for me to see what they're about.

TREVOR JAMES.

TWO BOOKSELLERS

DAVID OF CAMBRIDGE. Some Appreciations. Cambridge University Press. 1s. 6d.

ADVENTURES OF A BOOKSELLER. By G. ORIOLI. Lungarno Press, Florence. Privately printed for subscribers.

DAVID IS DEAD. His memorial is to be found, not in one churchyard, but in libraries up and down the country and on shelves all over the world, where stand books bearing his mark. Many generations owe their love of literature as much to him as to their teachers, for David, with his fixed percentage system of sharing the benefit of a bargain with his clients, put the riches of writing within bounds of an undergraduate budget. Each of us had his own finds. I could not myself run to the rarities, but a Ben Jonson of 1739 gave me sufficient pleasure, when I removed its marbled paper to find contemporary calf binding, to justify many times more than the threepence I paid. There was also a "first" of Wordsworth which turned out well worth five shillings, considering that a manuscript of *Yarrow Revisited* at the back enabled me to pay other book-bills with a speed to which Mr. Bowes and Mr. Heffer were not accustomed in their dealings with me. The days are over, when one rose earlier than usual to get to David's stall on Saturdays before the best had been bought. Future students will not know the delight of being able to afford a favourite author or making the acquaintance of an unknown because of the prices which he offered "remainders". But at least this book celebrates the character and testifies to the legendary honesty of one who, in T. R. Glover's fine words, "was not a man of science and only in a limited sense a man of letters; he wrote nothing; he held no chair in the University and he had no degree; but few men in the last generation have interested Cambridge men more deeply, stirred more men to the pursuit of knowledge, or given so much honest pleasure to hundreds of those who think and teach. He kept a bookstall on the Market Place."

It was a far cry from Paris, where David was born, to Gorleston, where his parents set up as booksellers. It is also a far cry, now especially, from London to Florence. Yet in Museum Street there is the shop of Davis and Orioli, and in Florence there is the Lungarno Press, run by Orioli. Lovers of books have reason to be grateful for both and now their debt is increased by the (private) publication of a book by Orioli himself. In it, he relates the events of his life, which led up to the partnership in Museum Street and away from it, to the founding in Florence of that press without which the world would have been the poorer for a number of rare books, notably several by Norman Douglas. *Adventures of a Bookseller* is, however, something more than a professional biography. It is, one might say, a revelation of that almost

forgotten art—of living. Orioli has had plenty of adventures ; some are off the track, others have to be looked for between the lines, for here and there one may suspect a discretion not indubitably native to the narrative. I couldn't call this book improper, but I will say that its uncompromising impudence is of the kind that begets a smile (not a snigger). It is told in a prose which many English writers must envy and written with a proportioned wit and reality which few Englishmen can achieve, either in writing or living. In terms of wine, let me say—clear, mellow, of rare bouquet, and ennobling to the heart.

ROBERT HERRING.

PSYCHOLOGY

SURPRISE AND THE PSYCHO-ANALYST. By THEODOR REIK.
(Translated from the German by Margaret M. Green.) Kegan Paul,
Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd. 12s. 6d.

A CATCH-PENNY TITLE for a good and serious book. The well-known Austrian analyst for whom Freud wrote his *Problem of Lay Analysis* offers his second book of this season to the English reader.

But while in the former book (*The Unknown Murderer*, reviewed in Vol. 15, No. 6, of LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY), he dealt with the psychology of criminal investigation, we are here introduced to several aspects of the technique of psychological investigation, i.e. into the psycho-analyst's own workshop.

Commencing with the division of the process of conjecture and comprehension into three stages, viz. (1) the descent of the subject-matter into the unconscious mind of the psychologist, (2) the unconscious assimilation of the data, and (3) the re-emergence of the data into consciousness, he announces the intention of dealing with the first and last only and with "the process of conjecture more than that of comprehension", thus stressing the greater importance of the unconscious in the whole procedure.

Through twenty-one chapters he next examines the various mental functions and reactions ; observation, voluntary, involuntary, and "poised" attention ; noticing and taking note ; knowledge, memory, and reminiscence ; finally the psychical shock supposedly peculiar to psycho-analysis and its relations to "surprise".—All are minutely defined, differentiated, dissected with the keenest of instruments.—Questions of time, tact, and rhythm, of pause, resumption, and repetition, whose psychological and therapeutic value any analyst will admit, are investigated and partially elucidated.

This examination of what are, apparently, well-known parts of the intellect leads to the conclusion that, from the simple act of observing up to the complicated one of grasping a strange psychological

connection in the mind of the subject, the first (and more important) part is played by their unconscious section.

So far we may go with him, but at Chapter XII the book changes from a flowing, poetic style to a harsh, polemic one, and the careful analyses of the earlier parts are followed by polemical statements—all of them leading to the conclusion the author wants, to convince us that the unconscious itself is an organ of perception (not only the source of it).

The interested reader will find these points dealt with at greater length in the *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, vol. xvii, part i, pp. 126 ff.

It is to be regretted that Reik's German literary style does not easily lend itself to translation. The English version though substantially correct has not been able to keep up with the author's numerous and extremely gracefully used quotations from the German classics.

A. GROSS.

SOCIOLOGY

THE ROAD TO WIGAN PIER. By GEORGE ORWELL. Gollancz. 10s. 6d.

WIGAN PIER HAD disappeared long before Mr. Orwell's visit, but the monstrous joke survived. He arrived at that town, whose grimness is a tag for music-hall merriment, in order that he might submit Socialism to the tests imposed by himself. His argument will be generally unacceptable to those whose adherence to Socialism is based on sober political theory, knowledge of history, and economic and disinterested faith. It runs thus: "For before you can be sure whether you are genuinely in favour of Socialism, you have got to decide whether things at present are tolerable or not tolerable and you have got to take up a definite attitude on the terribly difficult issue of class." One must ask "tolerable for whom?" Is the answer the sufferer or the onlooker? And the stark question of class has no importance when once economic anomalies are erased.

But, in the course of his search and pilgrimage, Mr. Orwell successfully identifies himself with the people of whom he writes. He insists on becoming the sufferer rather than the onlooker. He who reads will know to the last tassel on the counterpane and to the exact degree of the foetid smell, what the habitation of the degraded pauper is like. That arouses a remoter pity because economic readjustments would be an unlikely solution. But his descriptions of a miner's life and work with its rewards in wages and in housing, the death in life of the Unemployed and their triumphant struggle even with that death, are documents of historical value. So, too, are his thirty-two photographs. Who is the sufferer and who is the onlooker who can tolerate the

conditions to which those conditions are a witness? Class distinction is an irrelevance. The tolerance of such squalor and malignity in human society is another matter.

The second part of Mr. Orwell's book is an examination of the Socialist at the hands of one (himself) who has, for a period, identified himself with the working class in extreme poverty. He shares the working man's suspicion of the theorist and his view is obscured by the comic figure of those who reinforce hygienic fads by supposed political science. This standpoint, from which he rallies himself from time to time, weakens his political and economic thesis but adds strength to the internal evidence of the first part of the book.

In any case, Mr. Orwell should be heard. He knows.

RHODA HIND.

THE CONDITION OF BRITAIN. By G. D. H. and M. I. COLE.
Gollancz. 7s. 6d.

HERE IS AN assessment of the condition of Britain in 1937. The facts are completely and impartially set down and in such a way that even the untrained economist, even the "plain man", can read the picture. A certain thesis is presented to those who search after economic and political truth and are interested parties in the promotion of the peace and adequate well-being of the people.

There is complete information on the division of income and the distribution of property relative to the labour of the people as well as to the aggregate income of the Nation. There is examination of health and nutrition and its relevance to the economic state of the masses. The statistics of unemployment and the measures of State action are reviewed. The facts of the Housing problem are set out. Standards of living, education, and educational systems according to class distinctions are detailed and examined. The figures of national revenue and expenditure are given and against them are shown the yield of taxation (with a reckoning of what is re-distributive), and the cost and distribution of social services. The authors are able to show the increasing share which the poor pay in indirect taxation and in rates towards the cost of the social services instituted for their benefit.

Production and consumption are examined and a clear showing is made of the manipulation of limits of output and control of prices in the interests of the profit-makers: a process which has the result of frustrating the alleviation of poverty in a world of plenty. In a few succinct paragraphs the authors show the operation of the capitalist cycle of boom leading to crisis and on to slump. The remedy for the chaos which these facts and figures demonstrate is "an economic system based on the pursuit of plenty instead of scarcity or service instead of profit".

Having set out this "condition of Britain", the authors come forward with their prescription for cure. It is of a homœopathic kind. The forces inherent in the Working Class Movement must be rallied to the strategic points. It is argued that Trade Unionism, which has lately failed to adapt itself to the social and industrial changes, has not managed to attract to its ranks the masses of workers in the expanding light industries. By organizing a membership in the new trades it could bring those numbers into the Socialist Party and gather strength by the cultivation of a "collective consciousness united in a common struggle". If the mass of suburbanites and workers in the lighter trades are not organized under Trade Unionism, the obvious danger is, as the writers point out, for them to be possessed by fear that they may lose what they have and in their fear for them to turn to some form of fascism.

In a final chapter other factors to be reckoned are discussed. It is shown that the suppression of liberty in the totalitarian states may, if panic is aroused in this country, find here a host for its germ. There are, indeed, already some mild signs of the disease. Since 1914 police powers have been gradually expanding. After the police strike of 1919 measures were taken to make the police a more certain instrument of the capitalist State. The Emergency Powers Act of 1921 and the Trade Unions and the Trade Disputes Act of 1927 created effective powers for dealing with Working Class revolt. Those who are watching with anxiety the decline of civil liberties see the police right of search and seizure of documents become established by precedent. And the Law of Libel may operate as repressive of free speech and the whole machinery of Justice may become increasingly weighted against the Poor.

The conclusion is that if the deep-seated evils described in this book are to be remedied the country must be governed by the representatives of the common people and not by the nominees of the profit-makers. The common people must have the right to govern themselves and to exploit the profits of their labour for the production and maintenance of a higher standard of living. They must, too, have Peace, and it is the belief of the authors that only in pooled security within the League of Nations can such Peace be secured and the resources of the Nation thereby freed from the burden of excessive armaments.

Finally, holding France as an example, the authors make a plea for a People's Front which will unite all those who look towards Peace and towards such improvement of social conditions as will release the Poor from their bondage to poverty.

No one who is disinterested can gainsay Mr. and Mrs. Cole. Their facts are indisputable and their argument is entirely conclusive.

RHODA HIND.

PRISON FROM WITHIN. By RICHMOND HARVEY. George Allen and Unwin. 7s. 6d.

THIS IS GOOD descriptive work but without insight into the deeper aspects of the prison problem. The writer, sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment in the Second Division, served his time at Wormwood Scrubs and relates not only the life of the prison which must by now be fairly familiar through many works of fact and fiction to most readers, but a considerable number of biographies of prisoners in for varied offences. These are of interest but the real effect of the sentence on each is not much shown. For his own part the writer seems to have found the effect on the whole salutary, that is to say, deterrent, and so no doubt it is with a certain proportion of prisoners. He points out the senseless stupidity of some of the regulations, for example, enforced shaving with cold water, insufficient cleaning materials, and so on, but they are nearly all criticisms of details of administration. The prison staff from Governor to warders he seems to have found on the whole fair and humane so far as the system allows. Both the writer and his closest associates in prison were men of considerable education belonging to the professional classes so that the effect of prison life reacted on them in a different manner than it does on those who have less to lose and fewer powers of distracting themselves by reading and argument. The shame is felt less but the isolation from the crowded life of street or factory much more, by the average type of prisoner, and the needs of these more inarticulate ones are less understood and met. The writer has no faintest understanding of sexual problems either within prison or those which without led to sentence, but reacts with typical disgust to homosexuals. There is thus no first-hand information of the interesting experiments which have been carried out at Wormwood Scrubs of late years in the way of obtaining psychotherapeutic treatment for prisoners, only a passing allusion to one man "who was taken to a specialist in Harley Street every week". The book is worth reading as a reminder of the extreme "respectability" and almost excessive normality of many criminals whom there is still a tendency to regard as a class apart, dangerous animals entirely removed from our acquaintances and ourselves.

PETRIE TOWNSHEND.

METROPOLITAN MAN. By ROBERT SINCLAIR. Allen and Unwin. 10s. 6d.

THIS BOOK MAY be recommended to the provincial who suffers from an inhibited desire to live in London; it will cure him. It may be guaranteed to rob the most hardened optimist of his complacency. The pessimist alone will read it with real pleasure; it will confirm his gloomiest judgments and his choicest fears. Its thesis is that

Metropolitan man is a pretentious fraud. He is proud of his size, his possessions, his pleasures, and his supposed ability. Yet he is in reality unhappy, unhealthy, stupid, and insecure. He grossly mismanages his affairs. His houses are slums, his transport inefficient, and he cannot even cook his food. His teeth are rotten and his sight is bad. He is killed in motor accidents once every eight hours, and injured a thousand times a week. He attempts suicide at least five times a day, usually with success. And one out of every three of his lives is ended in the workhouse. These are only a few selections from the catalogue of his misfortunes and defects.

Now value, like velocity, is relative to the observer; and other observers, as accurate as Mr. Sinclair, find London a less gloomy place. But most observers are not accurate. They tend to ignore, or forget, whatever makes them feel uncomfortable; and therefore tolerate much that they would change if they could be induced to see it. Mr. Sinclair's flamboyant rhetoric may not be the best medium for his views. But his facts are certainly uncomfortable, and his statistics expose an amount of human frustration and unhappiness that is not easily forgotten. He may somewhat overdraw the picture, and give too little credit to those who do their best to grapple with the formidable problem of supplying eight million people with the necessities and decencies of life. But like the ass, which is sometimes encouraged by a carrot in front, sometimes provoked by a blow behind, human progress needs both ideals of the future and criticisms of the present. There are no carrots in Mr. Sinclair's book: he suggests few remedies and paints no Metropolitan Utopia. But his attack on complacency is a powerful stimulant, *a tergo*, to constructive work.

ROGER MONEY-KYRLE.

THE OTHER HALF: The Autobiography of a Spiv. By JOHN WORBY.
Dent. 8s. 6d.

AUTOBIOGRAPHIES OF CROOKS are fashionable. This author is now a young man of twenty-five. He found himself an orphan at the age of five, grew up with foster-parents and in an orphanage where he was very badly treated, and was then sent to Canada on a farm; subsequently he crossed over the border, to the United States, where he lived with tramps, crooks, and beggars, and became accomplished in the arts of these people. Deported to Britain, he lived for a time in the Highlands. The first chapters are interesting and vividly written, with an abundance of vigorous American slang, but after the first fifty or hundred pages the book loses its grip, and it needs an effort to get to the end.

MELITTA SCHMIDEBERG.

CROOK FRIGHTFULNESS. By A VICTIM. Moody Brothers, Birmingham.

THIS BOOK RECORDS the persecutory delusions of a madman who describes with much repetition of detail how for eleven years he was persecuted by a powerful gang of crooks because he had once been a rent collector. The hired agents of his enemies watched him continuously, suddenly appeared in the most unexpected places, made faces at him, stared at him, spoke for him by means of ventriloquism, made use of a "listening apparatus" to listen to his thoughts, influenced his thoughts, planned to kidnap and kill him, etc. We have, in fact, all the typical features of a form of insanity.

It is unfortunate that this second (revised) edition omits the more confused—i.e. psychologically more illuminating—of the author's remarks. A point of considerable interest is the fact that all the reviews quoted of the previous edition—with the exception naturally of the *Lancet*—accepted the reality of the author's persecution. Bleuler tells us that if a school-master decides to sleep in the well instead of in his bed, or a solicitor develops the habit of stitching stockings to the carpet, such incidents will strike people as unusual; but short of them, even marked lunacy may pass unnoticed for years. Perhaps it would be well to add to the numerous popular articles and lectures given on almost every imaginable subject a few designed to convey in the most elementary way to the "man in the street" what insanity is. Such knowledge might prove helpful in dealing with certain awkward situations and in promoting understanding of certain social problems.

MELITTA SCHMIDEBERG.

DRAMA

THE INFERNAL MACHINE. By JEAN COCTEAU. Translated by Carl Wildman. Oxford University Press. 7s. 6d.

M. COCTEAU STRESSES the fact that he is a poet; not only in the accepted sense of that word, but of the novel, the theatre, and the cinema. In so far as this emphasis means anything at all beyond a certain eccentricity in terminology, it appears to indicate that he disassociates himself from those whose literature and drama depend upon the exploitation of sociological and psychological ideas of immediate interest. The theatre concerned with these themes, which demand realistic indications in presentation, creates difficulties for the "poet of the theatre" in that the æsthetic values with which he is concerned may all too easily be swamped by the associative, and propaganda take the place of art.

Of the validity of this distinction or that, if valid, "poetry of the theatre" can and has been written in these circumstances, this is not the place to argue. It is merely not M. Cocteau's way. He has preferred to avoid the difficulties of what Mr. Carl Wildman in his preface has, somewhat gratuitously, designated the non-literary theatre by making use of a theme so remote from actuality as to be almost entirely devoid of any associations at all. The consequence is that, in this re-telling of the story of Oedipus, M. Cocteau has not so much written a tragic play as a play about a tragedy.

The story of Oedipus is too well-known to admit of the quality of surprise in the tragic *dénouement*. M. Cocteau has, therefore, concentrated upon its inevitability. A quotation from the lines spoken by The Voice before Act I will serve to show the intention of the play :

"Spectator, this machine, you see here wound up to the full in such a way that the spring will slowly unwind the full length of a human life, is one of the most perfect constructed by the infernal gods for the mathematical destruction of a mortal."

The spectator is then privileged to watch the oracle—"He will kill his father. He will marry his mother."—come true in a series of incidents that fit together with the satisfactory inevitability of pieces in a jig-saw puzzle. Not that the play has the clear line of development as in the Greek drama ; each of its four acts—Jocasta on the ramparts of Thebes, Oedipus face to face with the Sphinx, Oedipus and Jocasta on their wedding-night, and the climax of discovery at the end—is self-contained, though we are never for a moment permitted to forget the impending disaster. But the tragedy, when it supervenes, seems suddenly to be purely arbitrary, emanating as it does from the pointless machinations of the gods. This is stressed by Tiresias' lines as the trap closes upon Oedipus :

"I tell you Creon, the finishing touches are being put to a masterpiece of horror. Not a word, not a gesture. It would be unkind for us to cast over it so much as a shadow of ourselves."

By its futility, its inhuman agency, its very completeness, the tragedy becomes impersonal ; intellectually satisfying but emotionally void. Instead of being focused upon the characters, it is to the immortality of the abstract tragedy that our attention is drawn. Even at the end of the play, when in answer to Creon's "Who will look after them, who will admit them ?" Tiresias answers, "Glory," we feel that it is a tragedy that has gone out to lasting fame rather than a man.

Mr. Carl Wildman contributes an interesting preface and, on the whole, in face of considerable difficulties, his translation is adequate. Some of the colloquialisms might, however, have been improved. Do soldiers address each other as "Old son of a gun" ?

HUMPHREY HARE.

THE FLYING WASP. By SEAN O'CASEY. Macmillan. 6s.

"There is a nest of wasps that must be smoked out because it is doing the theatre infinite harm."—Mr. J. Agate

WITH THIS MOTTO, Mr. O'Casey buzzes forth on the stilly air of theatrical criticism. In the course of some two hundred pages of very readable discourse he tries to persuade the reader that he himself is wasp No. 1, and offers an array of stings to support the claim.

It is disappointing, this, because the stings are nothing like as deadly as the buzz would seem to threaten : and it is only Mr. Agate who is stung.

The reader will be very tired of Mr. Agate by the end of the book. Barely a page is without some reference to him ; line after line is taken up with the ridicule and exposure of his activities. Mr. O'Casey never lets up ; with the result, of course, that Mr. Agate's views are as prominently displayed as Mr. O'Casey's. So soon as the author begins to air his lively, sensible, and robust opinions upon the modern theatre, the spectre of Mr. Agate appears and is duly stung. It is meant to be waspish, it is meant to be funny, but it only succeeds in depriving us of the only commentary worth having—the detached views of a workman who knows his job.

"A man who has anything vital to say in the form of a play, says it with strength, and puts a comely shape on what he has to say, should be afforded the finest hearing the country can give him."

The Flying Wasp is an unpretentious book of essays, most of which have appeared before in a weekly newspaper, but it is full of sincerity and of hope for the future of the English theatre. Here is one playwright at least who knows and cares for the written word of drama. He could well afford in future to overlook the activities of Mr. Agate.

JOHN PUDNEY.

PRESENT INDICATIVE. By NOEL COWARD. Illustrated. Heinemann. 12s. 6d.

IT USED TO be said of Mr. Coward that, whatever he lacked, he did possess technique and a sense of the theatre. But in this book, he's gaffed. Having written a lot and said only little in many plays, he's done the same thing in his autobiography. There is neither the portrait of the man nor a picture of, even his, theatre. His book is simply one more story of local boy makes good, and being supremely detached from the standards of modern life, Mr. Coward makes good in the old, old terms of name in lights (there's a plate showing it), silk socks, "Ivor's" parties and Mr. Agate's pronouncements. "Theatre ?" Curtain.

To-day's theatre is made in clubs and side-street groups, added to by the occasional raids into the West End of those players and authors who can't be kept down. Mr. Coward has nothing to do with the Gate, the Group, the Mercury, and the rest. He need not have. But to be the

social obituarist of Shaftesbury Avenue is not to be a force in the theatre ; it's to be grape-nuts. Mr. Coward, carolling one more " hey nonny Noel ", has produced a brittle biography which may explain, but cannot help adversely affecting, any future estimate there may be of his pieces.
H. K. F.

VISITORS' BOOKS

LONDON'S OLD BUILDINGS. By JESSIE D. WRIGHT. Illustrated. Allen and Unwin. 7s. 6d.

AS THE SUB-HEADING is " And where to find them ", it would have been more helpful had the author said Apsley House is at the corner of Hyde Park, rather than merely " Piccadilly ". It is a pity, too, that the chronological order puts Mary-le-Strand more than thirty pages after St. Clement Dane. However, the book is nearly all it sets out to be, and part of what that is may be judged from such pious reflections as " Let us hope that the architecture of the future will be a worthy successor to that of the past and present ". Everyone will know rare facts which he will think should have been in this book ; but everyone will discover that there are plenty more which he did not know. Mild drawings match the writing, but do not compensate for the absence of photographs.

EDWARD FARRER.

HYDE PARK. By ERIC DANCY. Illustrated by EBBE SADOLIN. Methuen. 10s. 6d.

A GUIDE SHOULD be contemporary ; a historian accurate. The author of this book appears to have decided on neither his aim nor his vocation. " The Englishman," I am informed, " solves his problems in communion with nature." " The Romans left singularly little mark on England and her national life. They gave us only our laws." James Shirley, who wrote *Hyde Park* in 1632, becomes thereby the author of " one of the earliest plays in the English language ". Such things apart, this book is pleasant reading. Such things apart. It is indicative that chapters are divided by reigns. Still, the history of the Manor of Eia, as held by the master of the Saxon King's Horse, to its present state as Hyde Park cannot help but be entrancing, both to lovers in London and those momentarily within its span, if not its spell. The author gossips along, making more use of quotation than creation, from its days as a royal hunting-ground (that is, down to Elizabeth), from its opening to the public by Charles I, to as near the present as his mind lets him envisage. I find it a mistake that there is not more of Kensington Gardens, for these were not cut off from the park till George II's queen took what royal privilege called " an interest ". I would, indeed, have liked a more serious approach. The author is no Beresford

Chancellor and though he regales us with a description of the elephants at George IV's crowning, "mounted on a raft and drawn along the Serpentine by four boats manned by watermen in blue uniforms," he is woefully inadequate about such matters as the powder-magazine, the varieties of trees and birds (peacocks are not mentioned), he calls hares, rabbits, does not mention the extermination of squirrels, has nothing to say of the keepers and those mystic caves, their lodges, and is in general so keen on his idea of the greatest people's park in Europe that he ignores completely that sinister side without which his bag of sweets is made—Nerts. For where else in the world, on 1st May, would you find Labour demonstrations at one side, and a military camp at the other? With just as much of a crowd at both. And what were they watching in the tents? Soldiers dolling up, to attend the meetings the other end.

TREVOR JAMES.

THE SCIENCE OF DINING. A Medieval Treatise on the Hygiene of the Table and the Laws of Health. By ARTHUR S. WAY, D.Lit. Macmillan.

EVERYONE WHO READS Mr. Arthur S. Way's translation must remember that it is a serious book written by serious people and must not be laughed at any more than must its modern equivalents. In another three or four hundred years perhaps both it and its modern equivalents will appear equally amusing. But to-day it seems startling to read that "Pork, according to Avicenna, is more natural to men than the flesh of other quadrupeds" and that "salt fish should on no account be eaten, unless at a time when you propose to doctor yourself by taking an emetic. If, however, one has a craving for them let only a little be eaten and then only if one have at hand oily and greasy accompaniments that excite nausea". It is easy to say where that suggestion originated!

There is the strangest advice throughout the book, which to dieticians of the present day it will be most upsetting. The mild grape, we are told, is very sweet, heating, and flatulent and so is very injurious; the husk of rice if given in a liquid form causes immediate face-ache and ulcerated tongue; and stout persons should never eat eggs.

The book deals with, in the First Part, food itself and advice on how and what and when to eat; "As to frequency of meals the following is a good rule—one meal only in twenty-four hours or at most two. Or . . . take refreshment three times in every two days."

The Second Part deals with subjects to be chosen for serious conversation during meals, with suggestions; the Third with discussions on the Philosophy of Health, and the Fourth on subjects for Jocular Conversation. The latter is rather like a feeble Decameron. Of the four Parts the first is by far the most interesting.

M. D. COLE.

THE PAINTINGS OF REMBRANDT. 630 reproductions in photogravure, arranged by A. BREDIUS. The Phaidon Press. Allen and Unwin. 10s. 6d.

THE ART OF ANCIENT EGYPT. 340 reproductions in photogravure and colour. Introduced by PROFESSOR RANKE. The Phaidon Press. Allen and Unwin. 7s. 6d.

OTHER COUNTRIES ARE rich in well-produced moderately priced illustrated art-books. England, till now, has been poor. But the Phaidon Press, whose first books these are, is seeking, through mass production of enormous editions, to reduce the price of illustrated volumes without lowering the quality of reproduction. As the price is a tenth of what might be expected and the quality unimpaired, it is to be hoped that public response will allow them to feel they have succeeded. Granted one shares the fondness of all art-publishers for sepia, the *Rembrandt* is excellent. All the paintings are reproduced, the self-portraits are grouped together, and of important works, plates also give detail. Where pictures have been lately restored or cleaned, the illustrations are taken from their present condition. *The Art of Ancient Egypt* differs from previous publications in the same field by being drawn from smaller and less accessible collections as well as from the most important. It is an inspiring volume. These books, together with a *Van Gogh*, form the first of a series which will range from the art of past civilizations, through the classic schools of European painting, to those who form the immediate background of to-day's art. With a *Titian*, a *Botticelli*, and a *Cézanne* in preparation, our admiration of the scheme is only equalled by astonishment at the price.

EDWARD FARRER.

THE OTHER MAN'S JOB. By E. P. LEIGH-BENNETT. Allen and Unwin, 10s. 6d.

THIS BOOK IS, exactly what its title announces, a first-hand account of other people's jobs, the majority of which civilization takes for granted.

Many imaginations have been stimulated into wondering just what goes on between the walls of Battersea Power Station—and one has often craved to explore the organization behind the scenes of the Post Office, or else to excavate a chunk of pavement to find what lies underneath. But infinitely fewer people have been seized with ardent longings to patrol Billingsgate Fish Market at 3.30 a.m. or to spend twelve consecutive hours of fog and drizzle at the wheel of a Thames tug. Mr. Leigh-Bennett is certainly to be congratulated on his imperviousness to discomfort in these respects, and one cannot help admiring his energy, which enabled him to investigate tirelessly, at the same time, retaining sufficient illusions and curiosity to plunge into still further layers of squalor and extraordinary surroundings.

He introduces plenty of "life in the raw" during the course of his narrative, and reveals startling statistics (5,000 miles of gas mains lying under London's streets . . . 65,000 eggs and 10,600 tons of fish required for a liner's round trip to the Orient); as a mine of information, his book is extremely interesting; in view of the possibilities of his material, it is a great pity that he should have spoilt it by frequent and rather unnecessary patches of patriotism, and equally uncalled for remarks about the despicable character of the Russian government!

PERDITA PENARTH.

THE LAND OF WALES. By EILUNED and PETER LEWIS. Illustrated. Batsford. 7s. 6d.

OF THE SCOTS and Irish, the English have made legends; of the Welsh, mainly lies. It is a striking comment on the presence of gulf, though absence of frontier, between Wales and England that there should still be room for volumes "explaining" the Welsh to those who live the wrong side of Offa's Dyke. One cannot deny that there is room, for even to-day how many Englishmen recognize the Iberian streak in the Welsh, remember that it was a Welshman who, in the seventeenth century, founded at Rhode Island the first State with religious toleration, or realise that over 50 per cent of the world exports of tin-plates is supplied by South Wales?

The authors of *The Land of Wales* survey the Principality from every aspect—historical, cultural, industrial, etc.—and if at times they seem a little perfunctory, that is because they are made breathless by their attempt to cover the ground. The illustrations are also perfunctory; though there is a good plate of drawings of love-spoons, strikingly similar to Fijian double-bladed spears, the photographs are of the kind associated with railway-carriages. More academic and less romantic than Edmund Vale in his *World of Wales*, the authors still allow themselves the purple patch. As long ago as 1587, Churchyard wrote:—

"For most of Wales likes better ease and rest
Loves mirth and meat and harmless quiet daies
than for to toyle and trouble brayne and brest
to vex the mynd with worldly wearie ways,"

and in this book we have repeated the familiar "characteristics"—hospitality, love of music, long memories, "the understanding heart as well as the quick tongue." These are stock phrases, yet till they are understood, they must be repeated; even if, as I think, the Welsh character will be found, not in a chapter called that, but in a book about England written by a Welshman for his people.

JOHN EDWARDS.

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THE PROTECTION OF THE PUBLIC FROM AERIAL ATTACK.

By a Group of Cambridge Scientists. Gollancz. 2s. 6d.

SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS ARE that "in an area contaminated by mustard gas, the survival time (at moderate temperature) in the open air would be less than five minutes": "if the Home Office 'gas-proof' room were really 'gas-proof', it would be too small to live in for twelve hours": "in England and Wales nearly eight million people will be prevented from providing their first line of defence (i.e. a 'gas-proof' room)." The Cambridge Scientists' Anti-War Group, which made a critical examination of the recommendations put forward by the Air Raid Precautions Department of the Home Office, has itself been criticized; for instance, it has been pointed out that their gas-mask tests were carried out, not with the official civilian respirator but with a privately manufactured one, selling at 17s. 6d. Nevertheless, their allegations that the French precautions are superior has been followed by Mr. Geoffrey Lloyd, Under Secretary to the Home Office, making a visit of inquiry to Paris. After reading these experiences of testing suggested precautions and digesting the statistics, there seems little reason to disagree with the conclusion—that, as things stand,

"On hearing the air-raid warning, people will rush to their 'gas-proof' rooms and then, when the incendiary bombs set fire to the upper parts of their dwellings, they will either run out and be caught by gas or stay inside and be roasted alive under the burning house."

A. WILLS.

RALPH FOX : A WRITER IN ARMS. Lawrence and Wishart. 3s. 6d.

THE NOVEL AND THE PEOPLE. By RALPH FOX. Lawrence and Wishart. 5s.

THERE IS A gulf between the realities of men's lives and their aspirations, there is a gap between instinct as belief and the understanding of ideas, which is hardly ever bridged; except in moments of crisis. For the sordid irrelevancies of experience dull the flame of passion, and grey skies mock at its intensity. The Spanish conflict, which began a year ago, came as a challenge to us as Napoleon's invasion of the Iberian peninsula came as a challenge to Wordsworth and his generation. And the most self-conscious of us answered the challenge. It was not the sense of glory, therefore, that sent Ralph Fox to Spain, but the attempt at psychological honesty. "Our fate as a people is being decided to-day," he wrote. "It is our fortune to have been born in one of those moments in history which demand from each one of us as an individual that he make his private decision. We cannot stand aside, and by our actions, we shall extend our imagination because we shall have been true to the passion in us."

It is difficult to write objectively of Ralph Fox, so soon after his

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death, and if reminiscence be forgiven I shall best show the quality of his work through the inspiring character of his contacts with people.

The first time I met Ralph Fox was at one of those study circles off the Gray's Inn Road, which are the despair of ardent secretaries. There were only five young students present to listen to his analysis of the policy of British Imperialism in the North-Western frontier. But he did not refuse to lecture. Instead he sat down, and while we had the threepenny tea, he began to talk to us, at first quietly, casually, then rising to an earnestness of exposition that made the jig-saw puzzle of all the motives hidden behind British diplomacy a fascinating story of the evils of capitalism. I had struggled with Marxism for years, ever since I came across *Value, Price, and Profit* and *Capital* in the library of a secret socialist organization in Lahore, half-understanding, half-perplexed, because at college I read Pigou, Marshall, Keynes, and all the capitalist economics. But in that café off the Gray's Inn Road, listening to Ralph Fox, I seemed suddenly to understand it all, everything, as if the fire of his words had burnt into me. And I can recall the very colour of that hatred and loathing for the existing system that I felt as Ralph Fox's comprehensive and objective survey widened the scope of my imagination.

I came to know him intimately later. And the one thing that emerges as a crystallised memory of him in my mind is that intense preoccupation he had with ideas, that exhilarating passion for lost causes, and that intoxication of genius which he communicated to others without adopting the air of a platform propagandist and without a trace of priggishness.

Ralph Fox was always inspiring those with whom he came into contact, always he was scattering sparks from the creative fire which possessed him, whether he happened to be canvassing among the busmen in a Battersea garage or the office of the *Daily Worker*. Even at a cocktail party at his publishers in Vigo Street, I remember him turning to me with a fine, gracious gesture of his sensitive face which always wore a natural, unself-conscious smile, and asking me to write a novel about a young Indian proletarian he had met who had educated himself from the alphabet to Marx, and become one of the ablest scholars of the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow, but who was thrown into prison and starved to death on his return to India.

I do not want to apologise for writing thus, personally, about Ralph Fox. For I feel that the only immortality a man can achieve is in other people's memory of him and from the many tributes in the memorial volume, it is certain that Ralph Fox is immortal in that way. Also because it is that quality of "personal impersonalism" of his which came out in his actual contacts, and which is so obvious in the selection of his works and in the *Novel and the People*. And when the history of our time comes to be written, it is likely that there will be a chapter

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MULK RAJ ANAND.

FACT. Number 1. Containing "The New Economic Revolution," by MARGARET COLE. Fact Publishing Company. 6d.

USING THE SLOGAN, "a monograph a month," this book-magazine is a new publication which merits attention. The contributing editors are Leonard Barnes, Margaret Cole, Lancelot Hogben, Storm Jameson, George Lansbury, A. Calder-Marshall, Rudolph Messel, Francis Meynell, and Stephen Spender. All Socialists, they "take no notice of bans imposed either by the Left or by the Right", and, describing themselves as "endeavouring to be the modern Encyclopedists", they describe their object as providing "knowledge of how to make a much more fundamental change than the French Revolution". How well they succeed in this first issue, Margaret Cole's well-written "The New Economic Revolution" is proof. The number is completed with an article on hotel labour conditions by an assistant manager, and with reviews of books. The latter call for criticism, for they give the impression of non-proletarians trying too hard to be proletarian. Which is a pity. It appears to be inevitable in modern English literary criticism. That also is a pity. This is the only respect in which *Fact* fails to break new ground. Future numbers promise "I Joined the Army", by "Private XYZ"; a handbook of films by Rudolph Messel, and a fiction issue by Storm Jameson, Arthur Calder-Marshall, and Stephen Spender. They will be awaited with interest.

R. H.

THE PENGUIN SHAKESPEARE. Edited by G. B. HARRISON. Penguin Books, London. 6d. each.

THE NELSON SHAKESPEARE. Edited by JOHN HAMPDEN. Nelson. 6d. each.

GREETINGS, DEAR YORICK! We can bear thee on our back a thousand miles, now thou art so lightly printed as to be sold for sixpence! And having borne, what of it when we come to read? There's the rub—the Penguin is the much easier, but the Nelson's the more furbished. It has Additional Notes, Helps to Further Study, and an On Thinking It Over. That means by the editor, not by the reader. What's called a "pointer". The Penguins content themselves with Notes, Glossary, and a brief introduction. Also, an advertisement of other Penguin books.

I consider it excellent that two firms, at least, should realise the existence of a new reading-public and that all who might like to, can't afford the

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till now normal prices for Shakespeare. If I wonder whether those without money are more likely to spend sixpence on a paper-bound copy rather than eighteenpence on a Temple, let me be put down with Yorick, as dull, and old-fashioned. Publishers know their own business; if I think only two-thirds of the plays recall one to consideration unless one is student, that is mine. I imagine that a poor student would be led by enthusiasm to use public libraries. I am delighted if any feels his life incomplete without "Henry V", or "Verona", or "Titus". I'm glad the sixpenny public should be put in touch with these lesser plays. But it seems sad that neither of these firms should have employed younger editors, should have been at all of our time; the Penguin format is good, the Nelson attempts more; but neither realises there is a number of new critics, able to relate our times to Shakespeare's. I can't think it can be much help to anyone to be told that in 1589, Thomas Nashe "was then a bright young man". Still, for those who're not near public libraries, and can save bus-fares for new rather than second-hand copies, these are doubtless a good idea. As no one has to pay royalties, I only wonder why we don't have a penny Shakespeare.

A. WILLS.

THE AMBERLEY PAPERS. THE LETTERS AND DIARIES OF LORD AND LADY AMBERLEY. Edited by BERTRAND and PATRICIA RUSSELL. The Hogarth Press. Two volumes, 21s. each.

IT WAS PROBABLY impossible to produce a cheaper edition of this book, yet it is a pity that it could not be made easily available to the largest possible public. Certainly it is the most interesting of recent books on Victorian life. The story of Lord Amberley's defeat in the South Devon election might seem a fantastic nightmare recorded from the Dark Ages, had not English history repeated, less than a year ago, a crisis built upon the same kind of ignorance and will for power. It is essential that the dark strata of English intolerance and oppression should be remembered by political students. Lord Amberley was accused of putting forth a scheme for stifling children at birth, because he had *once* attended a medical and scientific meeting, where the abstract problem of population-control had been discussed. The mere consideration of the matter was the chief instrument in barring him from political life from 1868 until his death.

His wife, Kate, was a pioneer in fighting for the emancipation and education of women. Her essay on the subject could have been as easily written in 1910 as in 1870. Her story ought to be compulsory reading for girls' schools to-day, for it is really amazing that the miserably restricted and unhappy lives of thousands of women in the nineteenth century, could have altered so rapidly, during the last fifty years.

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The Amberleys were in the States for several months in 1867, and their report of the tortures inflicted on the Negroes is valuable. They met Emerson, and many of the Boston writers, but they hardly seem to have understood the vitality and complex elements then building up American civilization. They measured things by English standards, when the important influences there were Dutch and German, as well as British.

It must not be thought, however, that the volumes are entirely serious. They abound in amusing pictures. There is the gentleman of whom Kate Amberley records, "Mr. Newman had to leave directly after dinner for fear of his wife who did not know where he was and who has a peculiar horror of Miss Cobbe and Martineau; Mrs. F. Newman once jumped out of a window to avoid meeting Martineau." Or a casual encounter in the States, "the son has delicate eyes so he came away from College and went to the West, which disagreed with him." There was Mrs. Stowe, "she said she had found people dreadfully decorous and proper in England, and that sometimes it made her long to scream." And a lady who when met by Kate with a pony carriage, "was dreadfully frightened at the danger of the road and got out once." It is to be hoped that she did not live to see the introduction of cars.

It is interesting, too, to read at this date of soldiers shot down in Paris because they would not fight against the Commune, and of Mazzini's hope that should the Republican spirit triumph ultimately in Spain it might be followed in Italy. To quote, however, is to pick plums from every chapter, and the book should be bought or borrowed and read.

Mr. Russell's introduction and notes are exactly right for the scheme of the book, and there are many illustrations.

ERNEST HUDSON.

REVIEWS OF OUR REVIEWERS

It is the policy of "LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY" to choose reviewers who are specialists in their subjects, rather than those who specialise merely in writing about other people's. The majority of our reviewers do not criticise elsewhere, several are not professional writers. But they are all EXPERTS, and we are glad their work has been valued by those who in return review us.

We print below some of the latest notices of our last number

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